Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi, in a meeting with an Arab League delegation, denied "inaccurate" statements by the Jamahiriyah's UN envoy that Tripoli will hand over the Lockerbie defendants to the League, saying this would be done "only after" the International Court of Justice issues a verdict, Radio Monte Carlo reported.

Israel

A senior Air Force officer said that the U.S. team in Israel to investigate Patriot missiles appears to be there "for some special purpose, something about which we are in the dark, but which clearly has nothing to do with us," YEDI'OT AHARONOT noted. Rabin commented that if charges of transferring Patriot technology are found to be "groundless," "we expect them to admit their mistake if they do not find anything," Jerusalem radio reported. The Defense Ministry director general observed that "the U.S. Administration is sending us a clear signal that its strategic relations with Israel are being maintained" despite the Patriot probe, Tel Aviv radio noted. Health Minister Olmert, who is in Washington, "harshly criticized President Bush as the person he considers responsible for the deterioration of ties between the two countries" due to "Bush's personal and hostile attitude toward the Israeli Government," the radio continued. Direct-dial telephone service to 11 Arab countries will begin 26 March, the radio added.

Kuwait

In an interview with SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI, the minister of amir's affairs, asked about Jordan's stand during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, declared that "there can be no return to 'let bygones be bygones'" because "there is a real rift" "which the Kuwaiti people cannot forget."

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat, in addressing a youth organization, affirmed the Palestinians' "determination" to continue the peace process and said that this has "placed Israeli policies in an embarrassing position," Algiers Voice of Palestine reported.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Libya Refuses To Hand Over Lockerbie Suspects

Compliance With ICJ Verdict Promised

NC2503131192 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Faridah al-Shubashi dispatch]

[Excerpt] A source close to the seven-member Arab League committee charged with handling the Libyan case reports that Libya has informed the League that it refuses to hand over the two Libyans accused of participating in the Lockerbie incident, but it promises to comply fully with the verdict of the International Court of Justice [ICJ] in The Hague. The verdict is expected tomorrow. Libya earlier submitted the issue to the ICJ for a ruling.

Tripoli's leaders yesterday told Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid and the seven-member committee that Libya is willing to hand over the two suspects to the Arab League, on the condition that the league not hand them over to Washington or London. [passage omitted]

Al-Qadhdhafi Clarifies Position

JN2503180592 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1710 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Dispatch by Cairo correspondent Mustafa Bakri]

[Text] Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi described as inaccurate the statements made by Libya's UN envoy, to the effect that his country is ready to hand over the two Libyan defendants to the Arab League, which will in turn hand them over to the United Nations without any conditions.

During his meeting with the Arab League delegation that visited Tripoli yesterday, al-Qadhdhafi affirmed that Libya will place the two Libyans accused of downing the Lockerbie plane at the disposal of the Arab League. But he said that his country will hand over the two defendants to the Arab League only after the International Court of Justice issues a verdict.

According to Arab League sources, al-Qadhdhafi said during the meeting that he is not satisfied with the Arab League resolution issued during the recent ministerial council meeting in Cairo. Al-Qadhdhafi said that all traditions, customs, and principles of Islam stand in the way of handing over the two Libyan defendants for trial outside Libyan territory. He said that in spite of this, he has agreed to hand them over to the Arab League.

Al-Qadhdhafi warned the seven committee members that this scheme seeks to humiliate the Arab nation. He said that handing over the two defendants will be followed by other steps, by which the West and the United States will bring pressure to bear to hand over other Libyan Government leaders.

Al-Qadhdhafi said the West's battle with Libya is to seize the oil sources, so that they can impose complete hegemony over the Arabs' oil. He said that the Lockerbie case is but a link in a long chain that will end only with the defeat of the entire nation.

The Arab League delegation returned from Tripoli at dawn today, without achieving any progress worth mentioning. Cairo has started intensive moves and held urgent contacts with the Libyan Government to discuss developments in the situation.

Arab League Committee Departs Libya

LD2503135292 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Excerpt] 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Arab League secretary general; 'Amr Musa, Egyptian foreign minister; 'Adnan 'Imran, assistant secretary general of the Arab League; and the Algerian and Syrian delegates to the Arab League, as well as members of the ministerial committee set up by the Arab Foreign Ministers' Council in its emergency session in Cairo the day before yesterday [as heard], left Tripoli early this morning. [passage omitted]

Committee Leaves Tripoli Without Suspects

NC2503132492 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1203 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Dispatch by Cairo correspondent Mustafa Bakri]

[Text] Cairo has carried out urgent contacts with the Libyan Government in the past few hours in order to surmount the obstacles hindering the handover of the two Libyan suspects to the Arab League. The seven-member committee which visited Tripoli yesterday ended its mission without taking custody of the two suspects. The delegation returned to Cairo at dawn today after meeting Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and Major 'Abd-al-Salam Jallud, in the presence of Arab League Secretary General 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid. Arab League sources report that the Libyan leadership rejected the UN secretary general's written request to hand over the two suspects to the United States or Britain.

It appears that the Libyan leadership is divided over whether to hand over the two suspects and allow them stand trial on U.S. or British territory. It has been learned that Maj. Jallud informed the Arab League secretary general that the two Libyan suspects will remain in Tripoli at the disposal of the Arab League, but they will not be handed over until after an International Court of Justice at The Hague verdict is issued. Jallud affirmed that his country will unconditionally accept any verdict by this court.

Negotiations Continue

NC2503152492 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Ambassador 'Adnan 'Imran, assistant secretary general for political affairs at the Arab League, in statements to our radio correspondent about the results of the seven-member committee's visit to Libya, has affirmed that negotiations continue in a positive spirit in the hope of finding a solution to this crisis which is based on the principles of international law and the United Nations Charter. He said the committee is acting upon instructions from the Arab League Council and takes into consideration the fact that Libya is a member of the Arab League in addition to the importance of respecting international law to find an appropriate settlement for the crisis. It also considers the importance of expanding contacts with the concerned parties with the objective of finding a neutral territory and a minimum standard of objectivity acceptable to all parties.

He said he was amazed at the international sides' fear of a neutral investigation. He pointed out that since the United States is considered the superpower and the member with the greatest responsibility in the Security Council, it must respect the International Court of Justice Charter and wait for its verdict on this crisis.

The assistant secretary general warned against politicizing issues which are purely legal matters, because that would mean only one thing—undermining the legal principles on which the international community is based. He added: It is in the interest of all parties concerned not to escalate this crisis. It is also necessary that they provide the required measures to realize permanent peace in the Middle East based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which could open a new page in the region and whose positive effects would reflect on all sides, especially on relations between the Arab countries and the United States.

'Peaceful' Solution Sought

JN2503181392 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1610 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, 25 Mar (SANA)—'Adnan 'Imran, Arab League assistant secretary general, has stated that consultations are continuing in hopes of finding a peaceful solution to the Libyan crisis based on the principles of international law and the UN Charter.

In statements to the SANA correspondent in Cairo, 'Imran said that the seven-member committee working with Arab League Council authorization is taking into consideration the fact that Libya is an Arab League member state and emphasizes the importance of respecting international law, seeking a settlement, and expanding contacts with the concerned parties to find a neutral and objective platform for settling the dispute.

Regarding U.S. President George Bush's announcement emphasizing the need to unconditionally hand over the defendants, 'Imran said he hopes that the United States will refrain from making incendiary statements or threats since they do not serve the current positive approach, particularly considering that the International Court of Justice [ICJ] is the highest judicial authority and is the one that is empowered under its charter to tackle this issue.

'Imran said that given the fact that the United States is a superpower and the member with the greatest responsibility in the Security Council, it would be better for it to respect the ICJ charter as there is nothing that warrants not waiting for its verdict.

'Imran said that no legal system in any country in the world, particularly in the United States, the United Kingdom, and France would accept that the judge, jury, and the prosecutor be the same party.

'Imran said that Libya's stand on the crisis is based on abidance by international law, the presence of a neutral committee, and the acceptance of the ICJ verdict, no matter what it is.

'Imran said he believes that the United States will understand this, especially since it is better for all the parties not to exacerbate this crisis, to enhance positive efforts, and attain peace in the Middle East based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. He said that this may lead to a new page in the region which will have a positive impact on all parties, particularly on relations between Arab countries and the United States.

'Abd-al-Majid Meets With U.S., Russian Envoys

Confers With Pelletreau

NC2503202792 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1955 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Excerpt] Cairo, 25 Mar (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid this evening received U.S. Ambassador in Cairo Robert Pelletreau.

During the meeting, they reviewed the latest developments in the Libyan crisis with the West and the demand by the United States, Britain, and France to hand over two Libyan citizens accused of blowing up an American airliner in 1988. [passage omitted]

Meets With Polyakov

NC2503213492 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2040 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, 25 Mar (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid this evening received Russian Federation Ambassador in Cairo Vladimir Polyakov. The discussion during the meeting dealt with the developments in the Libya-West crisis.

The meeting took place as part of the Arab League's efforts to resolve the crisis through peaceful means

consistent with international law and legitimacy, particularly as Russia is one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

Egyptian Judge To Sit on ICJ Panel on Libya

NC2603083092 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0714 GMT 26 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, 26 Mar (MENA)—AL-AKHBAR reported today that the International Court of Justice [ICJ] has selected Dr. Ahmad Sadiq al-Qushayri as one of the judges that will rule on the dispute between Libya and the United States, Britain, and France. The selection was made on Libya's request.

The newspaper adds that Dr. al-Qushayri, former professor of international law at 'Ayn Shams University and currently a member of the International Law Association, will be sworn in tomorrow.

Filali Denies 'Rumors' of Impending Maghreb Summit

LD2503140992 Rabat MAP in English 1242 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, March 25 (MAP)—The press reports on the convening of a Maghreban summit to examine the Libyan crisis are "mere rumors", said Moroccan Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Abdellatif Filali.

Filali told MAP bureau here that there is no initiative in this respect and no plans to hold such a summit.

A high ranking Mauritanian diplomatic source also denied the press reports saying there are any consultations to convene an extraordinary summit of the Arab Maghreb Union.

"Agence France Presse" Monday quoted authorized sources in Algiers as saying that consultations were being held to convene an extraordinary summit of the five UMA [Arab Maghreb Union] countries (Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia).

Syrian-Iraqi 'Detente,' Border Traffic Reported

JN2603095592 Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU' in Arabic 26 Mar 92 p 1

["Exclusive"]

[Text] AKHBAR AL-USBU' has learned from informed sources that a real detente in Syrian-Iraqi relations began to emerge and shape up a few days ago on various levels such as the political, trade, and oil levels.

AKHBAR AL-USBU' has also learned that the coming days will witness a complete halt to all media campaigns between the two countries, and that the recent Syrian position embodied in President Hafiz al-Asad's objection to any new aggression against Iraq was a turning point in bilateral relations.

AKHBAR AL-USBU' has also learned that Tariq 'Aziz' visit to Amman and his meetings with a number of Jordanian politicians at banquets given in his honor by Zayd al-Rifa'i, Marwan al-Qasim, and Amin Shuqayr, and attended by high-ranking former and current Jordanian officials, focused on Iraqi-Syrian relations and the ways to overcome differences and ease tension in the two countries' relations. What Tariq 'Aziz presented in terms of ideas and suggestions that were conveyed to the Syrian officials, and what he heard from Jordanian officials on the need to forget the past and its drawbacks, have paved the way for the emergence of several denominators serving as a groundwork for the start of a real detente in the two countries' relations.

AKHBAR AL-USBU' has learned that a senior former Jordanian official will visit Syria after 'id al-fitr for talks with Syrian officials on these topics. This official hopes to succeed in his efforts before he can go to Baghdad directly afterward to complete his mission.

Iraqis arriving in Amman from Damascus have said that some Iraqis have begun to cross into Syria via the two border posts and that visit facilities are provided. Moreover, some trucks began to shuttle between the two capitals carrying food and medicine to Iraq. A feeling of satisfaction and optimism began to prevail in Baghdad, heralding a new chapter in bilateral relations.

Arrivals from Baghdad say the influx of foodstuffs into the Iraqi markets has largely contributed to curbing the exorbitant prices.

Commenting on the initial signs of detente in Syrian-Iraqi relations, a political source said this comes at a time when U.S. efforts for peace in the Middle East began to relax and at a time when the Syrians became convinced that the four rounds of talks led nowhere, that there are new U.S. attempts to further disrupt and weaken inter-Arab relations, and that Israel is seeking to drive a wedge between the concerned Arab states and make them fight one another on the shape of the moon before it emerges from clouds. Moreover, the U.S. promises and pledges made before the Gulf war have begun to lose credibility as Israel is continuing its settlement policy and intransigence, making no mention at all of its readiness to withdraw from the occupied arab territories.

All these changes and new developments have become common denominators that require restoring Arab solidarity and overcoming all previous differences. The political source, however, said restoring normal ties between Baghdad and Damascus will require normalization in stages over a long period of time, but did not rule out adopting decisive and crucial decisions within the coming weeks—decisions that will greatly influence the Arab march and the peace process.

Islamic Affairs

Iranian Military Involvement in Sudan Detailed

PM2503163092 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Mar 92 p 1

[Report by 'Uthman Mirghani: "Iran Steps Up Military Aid to Sudan"]

[Text] London—Informed diplomatic sources have revealed to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that Mohsen Reza'i, commander of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps [IRGC], paid a secret visit to Sudan recently to acquaint himself with the military situation and the course of operations in southern Sudan. He also inspected the Iranian weapons and ammunition sent recently to assist the Sudanese Government in its operations in the South.

The sources said that on his arrival in Khartoum the Wednesday before last Reza'i met immediately with the Sudanese Armed Forces General Staff in the operations room at the Armed Forces General Command. He was briefed on the course of the operations in which the IRGC are taking part.

Reza'i visited Sudan in December with Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and held talks with military officers on their aid requirements with regard to arms, training, and logistics. But his recent visit assumes more importance after foreign relief workers in southern Sudan and Western diplomats confirmed Iranian forces' involvement in combat operations in southern Sudan.

In this context five Iranian military elements wounded in the battles in southern Sudan last week were transferred for treatment to a military field hospital set up by Iran just outside al-Ubayyid, capital of West Kurdufan.

The sources said that 30 Iranian military experts are currently servicing Hercules C-130 aircraft, military transport vehicles, in the southern part of Khartoum airport. The Sudanese Army now owns about six C-130 aircraft, most of which have constantly suffered various breakdowns since the United States stopped servicing them and supplying Sudan with spare parts because of the U.S. attitude toward the present regime in Khartoum. This kind of aircraft is essential to the current military operations in the South, since there are no paved airports there, except at Juba. As is known, C-130's can land on short unpaved runways, which is why the government needs them to transport troops and supplies to the operations theater in the South.

According to the sources, Reza'i's visit coincided with the arrival of a number of Iranian advisers under Colonel Houryn Zadah, who will lead IRGC forces in operations currently being prepared to recover the town of Burr from Garang's forces. IRGC groups arrived in Sudan with all their equipment via Khartoum and Port Sudan between 13 and 20 March. The declared purpose of these forces' presence is for them to guard and secure the "peace road" which Iran will construct at its own expense to link Kusti, al-Rank, and Malakal (capital of Upper Nile Province.) But the sources emphasize that these forces will take part in the battles, especially since the road expected to be constructed passes through a military operations zone most of which is controlled by Garang's forces.

Islamic States Considering Withdrawal From UN

LD2003192492 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1620 GMT 20 Mar 92

[Text] Tripoli, 20 Mar (JANA)—The JANA Islamic affairs editor has learned that the Islamic countries have lost patience with the Western countries which have gone far in their belittling of Islam and the Muslims, their oppression of the small Muslim country Libya, and their excessive and absolute support for the Jewish State out of their grudge against Islam in a clear crusading war, exploiting for the purpose their domination of the United Nations. The Western countries have transformed the United Nations into a United Nations of Christian countries and an organization of Christian countries united against Islam and the Muslims.

This has become evident to the Islamic peoples and countries through the use of the UN Security Council [UNSC] against the Islamic countries, through the Western countries' use of the veto against any UNSC resolution that condemns the acts of terrorism and brutality that are committed against Islam and the Muslims by the Jewish State, and through their refusal to force the Jewish State to implement any of the UNSC resolutions which have reached over 49 resolutions.

In the face of this oppression and racist injustice and the crusading war that is being waged against Islam and the Muslims under the umbrella of the United Nations which have become an Organization of Christian countries, the Islamic countries have begun to think of collectively withdrawing from the United Nations to form a United Nations of their own, as the injustice and oppression have reached an unbearable level.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Vows To Continue Peace Process

LD2503180392 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1602 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] The brother leader President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] has affirmed that the repression and terrorism taking place in the occupied territories now require more than ever before international protection for our people. He pointed out that there are no peoples left who do not practice their right of freedom and self-determination, so why are our people denied these human and divine rights? They will not deprive our people of their right to live in dignity and freedom on their land. This is our land; it was and still is and will remain so. Brother leader president Abu-'Ammar stated this in a speech to the

opening of the proceedings of the administrative council of the General Union of Palestine's Students.

In his speech brother Abu-'Ammar reviewed the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and the uprising of our people, which is continuing despite the Zionist policy of repression and terrorism.

In discussing the peace process the brother president affirmed the Palestinian people's determination to continue this process despite the Israeli efforts aimed at sabotaging and foiling the peace process and despite the fact that the conditions of this process are not those laid down by our Arab nation but rather have come about in light of the international changes which make us all, Palestinians and Arabs, confront the historic challenge: to be or not to be. We have to struggle with force in order to change these conditions for the benefit of our Arab nation and Palestinian people in these very dangerous and delicate international circumstances. These are, however, historical moments which come after the third world war and the new world order. [sentence as heard]

He also pointed out that the Palestinian participation in this process has placed Israeli policies in an embarrassing situation and that the Zionist leaders have had recourse to several means to foil it and to defy the international will.

Mitterrand Letter to 'Arafat Backs Peace Efforts

LD2503180892 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1602 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, received an important reply letter from French President Francois Mitterrand today. WAFA has learned that the letter concerns the efforts exerted to ensure the success of the Middle East peace process. In this respect President Mitterrand declared that the French Government attaches great importance to effective participation in ensuring that the peace process currently under way to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict should continue. He also stated that justice and security should be ensured for the Palestinian people on the basis of the resolutions of international legitimacy.

President Mitterrand also expressed his great concern over the policy of building settlements in the occupied territories. He added that he is anxious that no harm be done to the historic archaeological and religious monuments of the city of Jerusalem.

'Arafat Adviser Scores Israeli Negotiating Stand

NC2203104192 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2310 GMT 21 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, 21 Mar (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, adviser to Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat, said that the last round of the Arab-Israeli peace talks in Washington has shown that Israel does not accept a withdrawal or recognize any Palestinian right.

In a statement made prior to his departure for Tunisia tonight, he said that all the plans that Israel proposed during the bilateral talks are an attempt to maintain its control of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip and to keep the settlements. He added that Israel's actions against the Palestinians are an example of the system of racial discrimination in South Africa which the De Klerk government has begun to change in order to improve its international image.

Egypt

EC Delegation Arrives To Discuss Peace Process

NC2603101492 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 26 Mar 92

[Text] An EC delegation including Portuguese, Dutch, and British representatives arrived in Cairo for a two-day visit early today. Leonard Mathis, Portuguese assistant foreign minister and head of the delegation, stated that Egypt is the first country the delegation is visiting, because of its prominent regional role, its pioneering role in the peace process, and its commitment to this process.

He said that several regional countries are now doing what Egypt formerly did. He added that the EC countries are seeking to achieve peace and surmount any obstacles. He said the EC delegation will meet today with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Dr. 'Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, in order to explore Egypt's views on the next round of peace negotiations.

The Portuguese official said that the delegation will also meet with Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid to discuss several Arab issues.

Foreign Minister Confers With Belgian Official

NC2303165792 Cairo Egyptian Space Channel in Arabic 1500 GMT 19 Mar 92

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa conferred today with Frans Roelants, secretary general of the Belgian Foreign Ministry, who is visiting Cairo as part of a tour of a number of countries in the region. During the meeting, they discussed the situation in the Middle East in light of the ongoing efforts to give impetus to the peace process, the multilateral negotiations, and preparations for the fifth round of bilateral talks.

Musa emphasized Egypt's interest in Belgium and the EC countries playing an active role in promoting the peace efforts and finding a just and lasting solution to the Palestinian issue.

Musa, Yemeni Official Note 'Excellent' Relations

NC2303140492 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1225 GMT 23 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, 23 Mar (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa today met Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Dali, Yemeni minister of state for foreign affairs.

Afterward, al-Dali said they discussed the excellent relations between Egypt and Yemen, the current Arab situation, and the ongoing efforts to improve Arab relations. They also discussed the upcoming meeting of the nonaligned foreign ministers in Indonesia, and Egyptian-Yemeni coordination for it.

Asked about alleviating the effects of the Gulf war on Arab relations, al-Dali said these will be removed through joint efforts to restore Arab relations on a new, clear, and sincere basis. Time will also help heal the effects of the Gulf war and all obstacles to restoring Arab relations and solidarity.

Romanian Trade Official Meets With Sidqi

NC2503123392

[Editorial Report] Cairo MENA in Arabic at 1525 GMT on 24 March carries a report that Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi received Napolean Pop, Romanian deputy minister for foreign trade, who is currently visiting Cairo. After the meeting, Sidqi said: "The Romanian minister conveyed a message to me from [former] Romanian Prime Minister Petre Roman on his country's wish to strengthen bilateral relations in various fields, especially the economic and trade fields, as part of the continuous progress in Egyptian-Romanian relations."

The report quotes Sidqi as saying the "growing trade relations between the two countries" and "ways of increasing bilateral cooperation" were discussed. The report concludes by noting that Dr. Maurice Makramallah, Egyptian minister of state for international cooperation, attended the meeting.

Cairo MENA in Arabic at 0740 GMT on 25 March carries a report that Pop departed Cairo "this morning following a three-day visit to Egypt." The report adds that Pop said that Egypt and Romania "have agreed to resume negotiations in April on Egypt's debt to Romania."

The report concludes by reporting that Pop met with Egyptian officials and businessmen to inform them about the current economic reforms being implemented in Romania.

Nigerian Finance Minister Arrives for Talks

NC2403164392 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1950 GMT 23 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, 23 Mar (MENA)—Nigerian Finance Minister Alhaji Abubakar Alhaji arrived in Cairo this evening on an official visit to Egypt, scheduled to last one week.

During his visit, the Nigerian minister will hold talks with Egyptian officials on strengthening bilateral cooperation in various fields.

Upon his arrival, the Nigerian minister was received by Finance Minister Dr. Muhammad al-Razzaz.

Editorial on U.S. Effort To Fulfill 'Promise'

NC2403083592 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0520 GMT 24 Mar 92

[From the "Press Review" Program]

[Text] In its editorial today, headlined "The Postponement of a Resolution," AL-AHRAM says that the Security Council bases its resolutions on Iraq on Article 7 of the UN Charter, which permits the use of force should resolutions be rejected. It adds that Western countries, particularly the United States, have worked to solve the Middle East problem, to fulfill the promise they made during the Iraqi aggression.

The paper asks: Why then does the Security Council not seek to renew the provisions of Resolution 242—which was accepted by all parties, though there were differences over its interpretation—so that it would be issued in a new form—agreed upon by world countries—to stipulate explicitly the exchange of land—all the occupied land—for peace in a reasonable period of time? The paper also asks: Why does the Security Council not consider Article 7 of the Charter to stipulate a punitive measure—the use of force—for slackness or failure of implementation?

Now that favorable conditions exist, would it not be better if the Council issued such a formula swiftly, to save much time and effort, to make the negotiating parties responsible to international legitimacy, and to settle matters still outstanding on a resolution issued 25 years ago?

Libya

Foreign Ministers Visit Tripoli for Talks

LD2503215392 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] The brother secretary of the People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation met Habib Ben Yahya, the foreign minister of fraternal Tunisia, in Tripoli this morning. At the meeting, bilateral relations were discussed, as well as ways to strengthen and develop them in various fields by the sons of the one Arab people in the Great Jamahiriyah and fraternal Tunisia.

The brother secretary of the People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation also met brother Ismail Ould Yahi, foreign minister of the fraternal Republic of Mauritania, this morning. At the meeting, which was attended by the Mauritanian ambassador to the Great Jamahiriyah, bilateral relations were reviewed, as well as ways to develop and strengthen them in various fields by the sons of the one Arab people in the Great Jamahiriyah and Mauritania.

The brother foreign minister of fraternal Tunisia and the brother minister of foreign affairs and international cooperation of fraternal Mauritania left Tripoli at noon today, after their visit to the Great Jamahiriyah. The brother secretary of the People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation saw them off at Tripoli International Airport.

The brother foreign minister of fraternal Morocco also left Tripoli this morning. He was seen off by the brother secretary for Arab Maghreb Union Affairs.

'Source' on Western 'Contempt' for Hague Court

LD2503165892 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1530 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Tripoli, 25 March (JANA)—Maurice Gourdault-Montagne, French Foreign Ministry spokesman, said that the resolution of the International Court of Justice will remain separate from the resolution of the UN Security Council, which takes precedence over any other resolution, including that of the International Court of Justice. He told journalists: We are bound by any resolution issued by the UN Security Council.

A responsible source at the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation commented on the French spokesman's statement, saying: Threats are not useful in solving any problem; the use of threats reveals that the United States, Britain, and France endeavor to show contempt for the International Court of Justice.

The source added that such contempt for the Court puts the world in total chaos, in addition to the fact that it promotes the development of extremist ethnic and religious conflicts and creates an atmosphere of chaos in the world.

The source wondered: Since there is no respect for this international organizations affiliated to the United Nations, why does the world resort to them?

He added: If the superpowers show contempt for the United Nations and the International Court of Justice, what is the use of that glass house in New York?

The source expressed fear that the three states (United States, Britain, and France) are putting pressure on Arabs, Muslims, and Third World countries, and pointed out that this behavior will not help solve international problems.

The source affirmed that these pressures do not frighten Libya or the Libyans who live on their land, who have no recourse other than defending themselves.

The source concluded: We warn our friends in France not to be dragged along by these policies, which harm relations between peoples and threaten security and peace in the world.

Kuwait

Minister on Iraq Ties, Jordanian 'Rift'

PM2603110592 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI in Arabic 23 Mar 92 p 4

[Interview with Minister of Amir's Affairs Nasir Muhammad al-Ahmad by "editorial staff" in London on 21 March]

[Excerpts] [SAWT AL-KUWAYT] All the cards are being reshuffled all over the region. What is the position on Iran, and is there any intention of including Iran in Gulf security arrangements?

[al-Ahmad] We cannot ignore our Muslim neighbor. Iran is almost a continent in terms of its area. Its population totals some 56 million inhabitants. It is a Muslim neighbor and we cherish it. It proved the sincerity of its intentions toward Kuwait during the predicament of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. And in September 1990 I was sent to Tehran by his highness the amir, may God protect him, to meet with Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. It was my first visit to Iran since I left in 1978, when I was Kuwait's ambassador to Iran. My meeting with President Hashemi-Rafsanjani was important and clarified the Iranian position and its conclusive condemnation of the invasion. Iran adopted a public stand on the invasion. Thus the lies circulated by the Iraqi regime and recently announced by its prime minister are mere lies. As for relations between the Gulf states and Iran, all the states have plans for broad economic cooperation with Iran. Also, the Gulf Cooperation Council has announced ways of formalizing the relationship with Iran, but it will take some time for our relations to develop. This is because Kuwait is still suffering from the effects of the sinful Iraqi aggression albeit on its way to recovery.

[SAWT AL-KUWAYT] The Iraqi foreign minister has denied in official statements that Iraq has any Kuwaiti prisoners or hostages. Is there anything new concerning the prisoners issue?

[al-Ahmad] Kuwait submitted the names of its captured sons to the International Red Cross Committee and is following this up with the Red Cross and other states. There is a known list of Kuwaiti prisoners. In denying their existence Iraq is playing with fire and trying to play for time. We hope that the Red Cross will inspect Iraqi detention centers and prisons in order to speed up the release of the prisoners and hostages. Their highnesses the amir and the heir apparent have said that we will not rest until our brothers and kinfolk are liberated from the claws of that bloodthirsty regime. [passage omitted]

[SAWT AL-KUWAYT] In view of the saying "let bygones be bygones," what is the position on Jordan's attempts to restore relations, especially in view of the special status that Jordan had in the Gulf?

[al-Ahmad] His highness the heir apparent and prime minister has announced that there can be no return to "let bygones be bygones." This is because the Kuwaiti people are wounded, and there is a real rift which the crisis caused and which the Kuwaiti people cannot forget.

[SAWT AL-KUWAYT] There was talk recently about freezing the Damascus declaration. What truth is there in this?

[al-Ahmad] It is untrue that the Damascus declaration has been frozen. In fact there are many practical steps toward its implementation.

[SAWT AL-KUWAYT] Is there a specific position on the Omani plan to form a unified Gulf army?

[al-Ahmad] The Omani paper, which included a broad study on establishing a unified Gulf army, is a complete plan. It was praised by his highness the country's amir, who sent special thanks to his majesty Sultan Qabus. A study is being completed concerning a mechanism for implementing that plan. [passage omitted]

Saudia Arabia

Shaykh al-Saffar Comments on New Statutes

PM1703150792 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 12 Mar 92 p 4

[Report on interview with Shaykh Hasan al-Saffar, "prominent Saudi religious and political figure," by Ghalib al-'Alawi in London; date not given]

[Text] A prominent Saudi religious and political figure has emphasized that the Saudi people's struggle and the opposition's moves caused the Kingdom's government to acknowledge the need to issue constitutional statutes for political life.

Commenting on the political "reforms" in Saudi Arabia, Shaykh Hasan al-Saffar said: "These statutes dashed citizens' hopes because they presage no political reform."

Shaykh al-Saffar is one of the prominent opposition religious and political figures abroad. He enjoys widespread popular support and his social and cultural speeches meet with a profound response inside the Kingdom.

Shaykh al-Saffar said that had it not been for the people's demands and the opposition's pressure and efforts both inside the country and abroad, Saudi Arabia would not have announced the statutes and the government would have continued to operate just as it has done since its establishment 70 years ago, without any specific declared law or constitution.

He said: "But these three statutes came devoid of content and dashed citizens' hopes because they do not presage any political reform or bring any change to the

method of government. In fact they are a regulation by law of the existing reality and grant it constitutional legitimacy. The king admitted this openly in the speech on 1 March 1992 in which he announced the statutes when he said: 'These three statutes are a consolidation of existing law and a reformulation of an existing reality already in force.'"

Shaykh al-Saffar asked: "Did the consolidation of existing law and the formulation of the effective existing reality need all that period of preparation and study—over 30 years," and especially as the king personally followed the subject for a long time? Shaykh al-Saffar cited what was published by the official media, which said: "The three statutes issued in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which have firmly established a new political and administrative life have moved it from one stage to another after nearly three decades of examination and study. And King Fahd personally revised them and made comments on them, because he was Saudi deputy prime minister and interior minister, for he has continued to follow up on these plans in order to bring them into being."

He said that "the propagandistic media clamor accompanying these statutes gave citizens and public opinion the impression that these statutes would initiate a new era and bring about a qualitative change and a major development in the country's reality."

Shaykh Hasan al-Saffar mentioned several basic points concerning the new statutes. First, these statutes repeated the stipulation that the government is based on Almighty God's Book and the Sunnah of His prophet, as stipulated in Articles 1, 5, 4, 7, and other articles. But the statutes did not explain how the principles and rules were understood and deduced from the Book and the Sunnah. And we know that many rulers past and present justify and impart a religious character to their political positions and practices. But understanding and deduction are often blemished by interests and whims, so who determines the method of understanding and deduction? And, for example, is Article 5—which stipulates that "the system of government in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a monarchy and is to be carried out by King 'Abd-al-'Aziz's sons and their sons"—inspired by Almighty God's Book and the Sunnah of His prophet and in line with the Islamic shari'ah?

Second, the extensive powers granted to the king by these statutes make them unique in the world. This is because there is no ruler who enjoys all these powers by virtue of a constitutional stipulation! This is in addition to the articles stipulating absolute role and extensive powers for the king as an authority over authorities, as prime minister, and as supreme commander of all the armed forces. He also has the power to appoint ministers, amirs, deputies, Consultative Council members, and officers and announce a state of war and a state of emergency. This is in addition to other absolute powers.

The statutes included more than 20 articles assigning matters to royal decrees.

Third, the most important shortcoming in these statutes is their disregard for the people and the complete abolition of their role. The people had no role in drafting such statutes. The government did it through a committee headed by the interior minister, as is known and contrary to what is done in most states, where the people elect a constituent council representing all regions, groups, and popular orientations to draw up the country's basic law.

The basic law emphasizes that the people have no role in making any amendment or change to the articles of these statutes, as is stipulated openly in Article 83, which stipulates that "no amendment shall be made to this law except by the same method whereby it was issued."

Shaykh al-Saffar says that of course "the people's opinion was not sought vis-a-vis these statutes through any form of referendum. Nor does any article in the three statutes include any reference to the people's role, opinion, or participation. Even as for the Consultative Council, which is supposed to be the people's representative and the arena through which they participate, its members are appointed by the king."

Shaykh al-Saffar pointed out that "despite the Consultative Council's limited powers, which are confined only to making proposals and expressing opinions when the government wants it to do so, Consultative Council members—all of whom are appointed by the king—have not been entrusted even to choose a speaker, a deputy speaker, or a secretary general for the Council from among themselves. They are all appointed by the king! In fact, the internal regulations for running Consultative Council affairs are also imposed on them by the king!"

He also said: "These statutes did not even recognize minimum freedoms for citizens with regard to political activities and the expression of opinion."

Concluding his interview, Shaykh Hasan al-Saffar urged the Saudi Government to reexamine these statutes and to change them to make them consistent with the people's aspirations and their legitimate right to participate in running their affairs. He also demanded further moves and struggle from the people, especially the opposition forces, which "must intensify their activities inside and outside the country to achieve reform and popular participation."

Saddam Praises Scud Missile Attacks in Gulf War

JN2503210192 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1709 GMT
25 Mar 92

[Report on remarks by President Saddam Husayn in addressing a medal-awarding ceremony honoring soldiers and Ba'th Party members; date and place not given]

[Excerpts] Baghdad, 25 Mar (INA)—His Excellency President Saddam Husayn, field marshal and commander in chief of the armed forces, has said that history is not an abstract idiom reflecting time. No, he noted, it represents action in time, missions accomplished in time periods, and accomplishments attained within a specific time span.

While reviewing with heroic combatants some of the chapters of the Mother of Battles, his excellency the president added: When the Arab nation, given the fact that it was assigned by Almighty God the task of relaying the values of Islam, which is the last divine revelation and message revealed to mankind, is asked what its sons have done with the Zionists, Iraqi combatants can respond: We have done a great deal. Thus, instead of seeing history conveying gloomy pictures detrimental to the nation, you, Iraqi combatants, have enhanced the nation's image and have shown that when it gets angry and when its rights are denied the nation can provide deterrence. [passage omitted]

The following is the text of the speech delivered by his excellency the president:

May God salute the men. May Ramadan always return to you with goodness and blessings, God willing. What will the personnel affiliated with the Air Force, the air defense, and the other parts of the Army talk to us about?

When a combatant talked of an operation carried out by his brigade in the al-Barqa' area in Saudi Arabia—an operation carried out at the same time that the al-Khafji operation was under way—his excellency the president addressed the combatant and said: Mention the date of the operation so that the Saudi rulers will not use the failure to do so as an excuse to say that Iraq had premeditated plans for the offensive before the war started.

The combatant answered by saying that this took place on the night of 29 January 1991. His excellency the president then said: I wanted the date to be emphasized because they lied at first when they said that Iraq intended to attack them. By so doing they wanted to justify their bringing in U.S. and other foreign troops. This became clear later on. I do not know who lied to whom. Did the Americans lie to the Saudi rulers? Or did the Saudi rulers lie to one another when they said that the Iraqis intended to attack Saudi Arabia—a matter used to justify their bringing in U.S. troops?

His excellency the president added: After a while, however, the same person who uttered these words denied these claims by saying: We actually did not wish to see Iraq withdraw from Kuwait so that the military offensive against it would be carried out for the reasons that he mentioned.

His excellency the president then addressed the following question to the combatant: Who are the commanders who commanded this brigade before you? When the combatant answered this question, his excellency the president asked him the following questions: Have you not tried to study the character of the brigade commanders who commanded the brigade before you? Have you not attempted to gather information about them and about the way they behaved with regard to commanding the brigade? His excellency the president then asked the combatant: How many battles did this brigade fight in al-Qadisiyah? Were you affiliated with this brigade during this battle?

When the combatant answered that the brigade fought many glorious battles and that he was not affiliated with this brigade [during al-Qadisiyah], his excellency the president said: Tell us about the most famous battles fought by this brigade.

The fighter said that he became the commander of the brigade in Kuwait without having had the chance to learn of the accomplishments of this brigade. The president said that he asked this question for us to know that when we talk about the past we say that it was the past. This country has had a considerable history; it passed through a certain stage. When we speak about time, we say that Almighty God first created Adam and Eve, and then the number of human beings increased throughout the world. A person's age is measured according to their date of birth. We can say that the age of this group in Africa is so-and-so years and that the age of that group in Asia is so-and-so 1,000 years. Does this mean abstract time? Does the past mean this or does it mean history? What is history? Is it merely time or does an action take place at a certain time, tasks take place at another time, and accomplishments take place at another time?

His excellency said: Therefore, when a commander is assigned to a unit with which he was not affiliated, this commander should study its history because the history of that unit will give him a sufficient understanding of its psychological structure—the foreign term for this is psychology [preceding word in English]—as well as the technical and tactical history of this unit. In light of this his personality can add positive things to the history of the unit or the formation larger than the unit—a brigade. Thus, the fighter can add something new and effective to the unit's history.

If a person becomes the commander of a unit or brigade the history of which is not known to him, he will become like a person who becomes the leader of people whose history he does not know. How can he lead them? He will not know how to lead them.

I want the military people to be concerned about this as of now. Their concern must be deeper. The new commander should officially request the personal file of the

previous commander and study his personality. He should ask the members of the unit or formation about his social, technical, and tactical behavior and how he dealt with all the ranks of soldiers and fighters; how he dealt with periodical and emergency leave; how he took care of the fighters' rations; how he acted early in the morning, or did he stay in bed until a later hour; and how he acted at night.

His excellency said: These are also human lessons through which you will find yourself, as a new commander, before an accumulated human action, which will teach you how to behave without necessarily formulating you. You also have your own personality and judgment. Then remind the fighter that his unit's morale was high while it carried out that duty. The president asked him: Why was its morale high? The fighter answered: Because we all followed the correct military techniques.

After talking about the distribution of vehicles, the fighter was asked by the president: Did you distribute the vehicles the moment they were needed or did you distribute them in accordance with a known plan to prepare their emplacements in advance?

Did you distribute them under shelling or were they placed in their correct positions as they should have been?

The fighter said that they were distributed in accordance with plans except for some vehicles which carried water, fuel, and ammunition. [passage omitted]

A fighter then talked about our surface-to-surface missiles. The president said: God bless surface-to-surface missiles, which deserve every amount of praise. Because you made Israel cry, everything else will be easy. I fully acquainted myself with their performance. Convey my greetings to all men of the surface-to-surface missile units. They enhanced the image of the Arab nation. When they say the Arab nation is entrusted by God to convey the message of Islam to humanity as the last message and when they ask what you did against the Zionist aggressors, you will answer: We did so and so. Instead of recording a dark spot harming the nation history will enhance the image of the nation. At least you have proved that when the nation becomes angry and its rights are usurped it can reply, God be praised.

His excellency said: Palestinian and Jordanian women stood on rooftops and uttered shrill cries when they saw missiles passing over their heads. Matters got to the point where the brothers and sons of your Palestinian people inside Palestine sent word urging us to strike Zionist targets everywhere regardless of possible Palestinian casualties. What is important for you is to make the enemy understand that usurped rights cannot be forgotten if they are claimed by faithful men and people. The men of the surface-to-surface missile units acted cleverly in accordance with their directives in how they maneuvered, in how they used their launchers before being spotted, and in how they left the area after firing their missiles. They were very clever and very self-restrained. God bless you. [passage omitted]

Calls for Increased Responsibility

JN2503182692 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1703 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] His Excellency President Saddam Husayn, field marshal and commander in chief of the armed forces, has said that history is not an abstract idiom reflecting time. He said that it rather represents action in time, missions accomplished in time periods, and accomplishments scored within a specific time span.

While reviewing with heroic combatants some of the chapters of the Mother of Battles, his excellency the president added: When the Arab nation, given the fact that it was assigned by Almighty God the task of relaying the values of Islam, which is the last divine revelation and message revealed to mankind, is asked what its sons have done with the Zionists, Iraqi combatants can then say: We have done a great deal. Thus, instead of seeing history conveying gloomy pictures detrimental to the nation, you, Iraqi combatants, have enhanced the nation's image and have shown that when it gets angry and when its rights are denied it can provide deterrence.

As part of his educational talk on the deterioration and discord marking the values cherished by our society, the prime cause of which has been the massive and rapid emigration from rural areas to cities, his excellency the leader president said, in recalling the noble values of our society: We must cooperate to revive a sense of responsibility by those whose psyche and conduct have been shaken. Besides, we must teach people how to teach this sense of responsibility to their sons and how to nurture it within their personalities.

These educational teachings were voiced during a ceremony to award medals of courage to a number of heroes of our Air Force and air defense, to heroes of our missile force, to a number of combatants from the ranks of other classes of our armed forces, to a number of party comrades who contributed toward confronting the treacherous and treasonous elements, and also to an elite group of military escorts and media assistants of his excellency the president, commander in chief of the armed forces.

UN Experts Destroy Ballistic Missile Components

NC2503143392 Paris AFP in English 1410 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Baghdad, March 25 (AFP)—U.N. weapons experts in Iraq on Wednesday destroyed components used to make ballistic missiles, team leader Derek Boothby said.

He told journalists several components and parts used in the manufacture of ballistic missiles had been destroyed during the day.

IAEA Set To Destroy al-'Atiyah Nuclear Site

AU2503142792 Paris AFP in English 1324 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Excerpts] Vienna, March 25 (AFP) — The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said Wednesday it would begin destroying the Iraqi al-'Atiyah nuclear weapons development site in April. "The destruction will begin under the supervision of the 11th IAEA inspection team, in early-to mid-April. It is part of the continuing destruction of the Iraqi nuclear weapons capability carried out by the IAEA pursuant to Resolution 687," the agency said in a communique.

The 11th IAEA experts mission is due to arrive in Iraq on April 5.

Iraq had claimed the al-'Atiyah site could be used for civilian purposes but the IAEA said: "In spite of lengthy and detailed explanations given by the Iraqi technical team on the civil nature and functions of al-'Atiyah, the IAEA remains convinced that the technical core of this facility was designed for special processes needed for nuclear weapons development and manufacturing, including uranium metallurgy." [passage omitted]

International experts in the Gulf said the United Nations would dispatch at least three missions to force Iraq into eliminating, "as soon as possible", its weapons of mass destruction.

Chemical weapons experts wrapped up a month-long mission to Iraq on Tuesday during which 463 chemically-tipped missiles were destroyed. Another team of ballistic missile specialists is to begin verifying Iraqi data that scores of missiles have already been dismantled.

French chemical expert Michel Desgranges, who led a 26-member team, said there were probably thousands of chemically-tipped missiles still in Iraq that must be destroyed. His group took a month to uncover the first batch of 463 such weapons at the al-Khamisiyah site some 400 kilometers (249 miles) south of Baghdad.

The destruction of all chemical weapons stocks, most of which may be found at the al-Muthanna site, and, the neutralization of all Iraqi weapons, is a long-term project, several U.N. experts have said.

Desgranges told reporters in Manama his team had worked daily at al-Khamasiyah with about 40 Iraqi employees without encountering any problems on the technical level.

Briton Derek Boothby, who has since March 21 led a U.N. ballistic mission, also praised Iraqi cooperation.

Last week Iraq formally promised to allow the destruction of its ballistic missiles, following a recent visit to the United Nations Security Council by Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz.

But Washington has expressed skepticism about Iraq's real intention to dispose of its most destructive weapons, citing Baghdad's poor track record.

Army Resumes Shelling of Kifri 24 Mar

LD2503100292 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] The Kifri region in northern Iraq has again come under heavy shelling from the Iraqi Army. According to Iraqi Kurdish sources the shelling continued all day yesterday and the region's civilian population suffered heavy material losses. These sources added: The Iraqi Army has concentrated its forces in the Kifri region and with its continuous heavy shelling of the region plans to launch an extensive attack against the Kurdish regions of northern Iraq.

Yesterday's shelling of Kifri was the third such attack this week.

National Assembly Condemns Anti-Libyan Resolution

JN2503134492 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1240 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Baghdad, 25 Mar (INA)—The National Assembly has condemned the new draft resolution which the United States, Britain, and France have agreed submit against fraternal Libya.

In a statement issued today the National Assembly affirmed that this draft resolution constitutes a dangerous precedent in international relations aimed at terrorizing Third World peoples and humbling the world community's resolutions because it reflects the views of its authors.

In its statement the Assembly added that Washington, London, and Paris are applying various forms of pressure on the Security Council members to make them approve the new draft resolution. The Assembly indicated that this method being pursued by some world powers is a form of international terrorism practiced against an independent country and a member of the international community.

The statement pointed out that some members of the Security Council are attempting to create justifications for launching a treacherous act of aggression against fraternal Libya under the guise of combating so-called international terrorism while ignoring the fact that the Zionist entity is perpetrating terrorism inside and outside the occupied territories.

The statement appealed to the rest of the permanent and nonpermanent members of the UN Security Council not to pass this unfair draft resolution against fraternal Libya and affirmed the Iraqi National Assembly's support for the Libyan Arab people to thwart all the conspiracies now being hatched against our Arab nation and also to meet the challenges facing it.

Paper Says Detainee Issue Linked to Blockade

JN2203092292 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0735 GMT 22 Mar 92

[Text] Baghdad, 22 Mar (INA)—AL-THAWRAH newspaper condemns the determination of the aggression alliance to cast doubts, make accusations, and fabricate excuses to maintain the illegal blockade imposed on Iraq.

In an article published today the paper adds that the parties to the aggression alliance, particularly the United States, Britain, France and the Saudi and Kuwaiti rulers, are continuing with immense rancor, lowness, and meanness their brute aggression against our people and country despite the fact that more than one year has passed since the cease-fire went into effect.

The paper adds: These parties are making up flimsy and cheap excuses, leveling charges, and voicing false and baseless allegations to maintain the inhuman blockade they are imposing on Iraq.

The paper maintains that the biased letter sent to the UN secretary general by the British, U.S., French, Saudi, and Kuwaiti delegates concerning the issue of Kuwaitis allegedly being held in Iraq is part of an anti-Iraq effort by the rulers imposed on Kuwait. Elaborating on this point, AL-THAWRAH adds: They were expected to make up this scandalous story and to go too far in their frenzied endeavors.

The paper emphasizes that this fabricated story, which was refuted by the documented facts contained in the letter which the foreign minister sent to the UN secretary general, is merely part of the new, yet old, U.S. media and political campaign which seeks to terrorize Iraq, put pressure on it, and also mislead world public opinion and the world body in order to maintain the unjust blockade imposed on Iraq. Furthermore, the paper notes, this campaign shows how frustrated and disappointed these enemies have become as a result of their apparent failure to twist the arm of great Iraq and to undermine its will.

Article Criticizes Arab Peace Negotiators

JN2203181592 Baghdad BABIL in Arabic 19 Mar 92 p 3

[Article by Dr. Muwaffaq Bani-al-Marjah: "The Stupid Negotiators Facing Bitter Reality"—punctuation as published]

[Text] The "settlement" game being practiced skillfully and adroitly by the "Israeli" players with "the Arabs of Bush and Shamir" is about to end with the conclusion of the fourth round on Washington's playground.

One year after its inception the issue is still at square one. The "Israelis" have gone a long way in expansion, settlement activity, and accommodation of new immigrants at the expense of the occupied Arab territories, which have been officially annexed to the "Israeli" entity without any sign of relinquishing them. The delegations of "Arab surrender," on the other hand, still hope that Bush and America will liberate their territories and pressure "Israel," in much the same way that Satan hopes he will go to Heaven.

The submissive diplomat, Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, "the representative of al-Asad's regime at the negotiations," did not forget that (one year has passed since Bush launched the U.S. peace initiative on 6 March 1991 calling on Middle East parties to negotiate a peaceful solution based on compromise).

The Americans have played their game skillfully for over a year. Although they have not abandoned U.S. foreign policy constants that deem "Israel" a strategic ally and an advance U.S. state in the Middle East, they have sought to appease "America's Arabs" and have pretended that they are rewarding them for their stands and acceptance of the negotiations by raising the issue of "Israeli loan guarantees." They did not, however, refrain from criticizing "Arab intransigence" and "focusing on propaganda" and other remarks that were described by the "Israeli" delegation as "the same remarks that we want to make." Thus a entire year in the life of the Palestine question and the Arab cause in general has been wasted in (talks with delegates chosen by Shamir to turn the talks into an empty dialogue), as Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz put it. Nevertheless, the representative of al-Asad's regime to the empty dialogue did not refrain from saying that (the Arab states would recognize the Zionist government and establish diplomatic and security relations with it if it abandoned the territories it occupied in 1967).

Zalman Shoval, "the Zionist ambassador" in Washington, then delivered the coup de grace when he declared the end of the empty talks (hoping that at least another round will be held prior to Israeli elections) without setting any date for the next round. The al-Asad and al-Hirawi delegations suggested postponing the talks until after the "Israeli" general elections because the Zionist delegation is acting as a representative of an interim government and cannot present serious and realistic ideas and opinions.

This regrettable development in the talks has prompted the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], led by George Habash, and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP], led by Nayif Hawatimah, to ask for the withdrawal of the Palestinian delegation from the negotiations after they reached a dead end because (their continuation represents a cover for "Israel's" aggressive policy and settlement activity in the occupied territories). The PFLP and DFLP also criticized the presentation of a Palestinian working paper on self-rule measures prior to the halting of settlement activity because this is a (concession offered free of charge to Israel).

The truth is that the Palestinian negotiating team presented five proposals to the "Israeli" delegation along

with a comprehensive working paper for the transitional phase, and it was not reluctant to amend these plans to approximate viewpoints and reach an understanding. The "Israeli" delegation, however, maintained its "strategic" stand despite all apparent pressures. But Shamir did not hesitate to sacrifice power and give a chance to Yitzhaq Rabin and his party to replace him so as to blow up "the peace process," which contradicts the Zionist expansionist "strategy."

Perhaps it is appropriate in this regard to recall a statement made to Israel Defense Force radio by General Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of the 30-state aggressive alliance forces against Iraq, in which he unmistakably declared that (the United States fought for "Israel").

How long do these stupid people need after having wasted time negotiating for four rounds and coming back empty-handed even though Schwarzkopf and Shamir did not conceal the truth?

DPK Political Bureau Criticizes PKK, Ankara

NC2503184692 (Clandestine) Voice of the Iraqi People in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] In the first frank reaction by the Political Bureau of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan [DPK], Bureau member Nechirvan al-Barzani has condemned the armed men of Turkey's Kurdish Workers Party [PKK] concerning the clashes which recently took place in southeast Turkey and in which more than 55 people were killed. He also criticized the Turkish Government. He said in a statement in Zakho to REUTER: We oppose the terrorism of the PKK as well as Turkish oppression.

Iraqi Kurdish leaders reject the PKK's methods and describe them as reckless and prompting reprisals. Nechirvan al-Barzani said that he had informed Turkish President Ozal that democracy is the best weapon against terrorism in Turkey.

DPK leader Mas'ud al-Barzani told REUTER: We founded the Turkish PKK, and without us it means nothing. He said: The behavior of the aforementioned party has led to the ruin of the reputation of Kurds everywhere.

He added that the documents which have been seized [not further specified] revealed plans by the aforementioned party to assassinate the leaders of the Iraqi Kurdish movement.

Kurds Launch News Agency, Experimental TV

JN2003193092 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1830 GMT 20 Mar 92

[Text] For our dear listeners, writers, journalists, and our people's friends everywhere, we announce new progress in our media campaign.

1. The Kurdistan television station, Channel One, in English, KTV-1 [preceding acronym in English], has begun experimental broadcasts thanks to the efforts of our comrades in beloved Duhuk. This marks the beginning of extensive television transmission.

2. The KURDISTAN NEWS AGENCY, KNA [preceding acronym in English], in English, has recently been set up at the Salah al-Din summer resort.

It is worth mentioning that the KURDISTAN NEWS AGENCY is an old idea of our party. Plans to establish the KURDISTAN NEWS AGENCY were first conceived in 1974 but the project was postponed. In 1985 plans were revived and another plan to carry out the project was drawn up. That same year comrades from the (?Rizgari) party in Turkish Kurdistan paid us a visit. We were told by them that they set up in Sweden the (?Jalala) Media Institute, which in turn established a Kurdistan news agency and founded the newspaper KURDISTAN PRESS as well as a publishing house. We congratulated the comrades on the establishment of that Kurdistan news agency in Sweden and we helped that news agency with some assistance and news from inside Kurdistan. That agency is still in operation.

But now we have established the KURDISTAN NEWS AGENCY, KNA, inside Kurdistan. We bring this good news to the attention of our people and their friends, particularly media persons inside and outside. Greetings to the lively and courageous Kurdish media.

Kurdish Radio Urges Army To End 'Dictatorship'

NC2003103892

[Editorial Report] (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic at 1613 GMT on 19 March carries the first of three appeals "to our brother officers, noncommissioned officers, and soldiers of the Iraqi Armed Forces." The appeal draws attention to the "blunders" of the "dictatorship which has caused the destruction of three-fourths of the Iraqi Army in its abortive battles with Iran, Kurdistan, and the allies." It goes on to underline that the victims were neither the sons nor the cousins of Saddam Husayn but rather the common people themselves. The appeal calls on them to realize the suffering of the people at the hands of the dictatorship and to "prevent the dictatorship from destroying the remainder of the Iraqi Army, which was established to defend the people and the homeland, not to kill the people and destroy the homeland."

The second appeal, carried at 1620 GMT, notes that "the dictatorship is not concerned about the future of Iraq or its people. What is of concern to it is to hold onto power, even if this takes place at the expense of Iraq's future and its people." The appeal concludes by asking: "Is it the duty of the Iraqi Army to participate, God forbid, in the final destruction of Iraq and its people, or is it not one of its primary duties to defend Iraq and its people?"

The third appeal, carried at 1629 GMT, says: "Your families and children are more precious than the dictatorship. Your homeland and people are dearer and more precious than the dictatorship." The appeal notes that Tikrit, al-Basrah, Karbala', and other cities are more precious than the dictator because they are part of Iraq and not part of the dictator and the dictatorship. After noting that the Iraqi Army is the army of Iraq and its people and not the army of the dictator and the dictatorship, the appeal concludes by calling on officers and soldiers to "do their duty toward their homeland and the people, to put a final end to the tragedies of our people and the homeland, and to direct your weapons at the dictatorship."

Commentary Says Kurds Seek Peaceful Solution

JN2103071192 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1845 GMT 20 Mar 92

[Station commentary]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The Kurdish people have always been the victim of two things: persecution on a national basis and despotism on the local level, and the complicated regional and international alliances.

Dear listeners: The Kurdish people have always shown good intentions. They are a peace-loving people who respond to any move toward peace and who want to live in tranquillity and safety in their homeland. This is the stand that the Kurdish people have always adopted and this will continue to be their stand on the condition that they can live in freedom, with their heads high, and enjoy their legitimate national rights far from despotism, terrorism, and encroachments.

Since its establishment in March 1988 the Iraqi Kurdistan Front has adopted this trend and has supported the efforts for a peaceful solution to the Kurdish issue if the appropriate conditions become available. In April 1991 the Front reiterated its democratic and peaceful course of action. From this premise it held negotiations with the Iraqi Government to attain a suitable formula for settling the cause, a formula that satisfies the Kurdish people's rights, meets their aspirations, and secures human rights and democracy in Iraq. [passage omitted]

The Iraqi Kurdistan Front has sent several delegations to Baghdad, including the visit of brother Mas'ud al-Barzani, to settle the problems, particularly the lifting of the economic and administrative siege. So far, however, the Iraqi authorities have not responded. On the contrary they tightened the siege and caused many human tragedies this winter as a result of the acute shortage of fuel. It has also been noticed that provocations and reinforcements by the Iraqi Army have been intensified along the contact lines in the various parts of Kurdistan.

We wonder: Does such a stand serve the resumption of the negotiations? Who should take the initiative to settle problems?

For our part we have offered all that is within our means to make the negotiations a success. We believe that we have done so and we have worked for this objective. Then why not lift the siege? Why this escalation of the situation?

Free Arabs, wherever you may be in the Arab world, our beloved citizens, the sons of the glorious, steadfast, and patient Iraqi people, and our militant sons of Kurdistan, be alert and watch out for evil attempts, God forbid. Our bitter experience from scores of incidents and events since the establishment of the state of Iraq in the twenties has taught us how they can mix poison with honey and how they utter sweet words while preparing for treachery.

We ask God to protect the Iraqi and Kurdish people from any treacherous act or tragedy, particularly during this blessed month of Ramadan. We take God as our witness that the Kurdish people really seek peace and really seek a peaceful solution to their cause. We take God as our witness that in spite of their sufferings and deep wounds our people have tried to rise above all their sufferings for the sake of preserving the Iraqis' blood and the lives of the remaining Kurds so that they may again enjoy stability in their homes and areas and resume their normal lives in the way that the other people on this earth live. This peaceful and good people has never attacked anyone. On the contrary, it was others who slaughtered them and who exterminated them in their own homes, farms, and fields.

RCC Vice Chairman Visits al-Ta'mim Governorate

JN2203200692 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 22 Mar 92

[Text] 'Izzat Ibrahim, Revolution Command Council [RCC] vice chairman, visited al-Ta'mim Governorate today. He met with al- Ta'mim Governor Yasir Hasan Sultan and a number of governorate officials. During the meeting they reviewed services to citizens, the current campaign to rebuild what was destroyed by the treacherous 30-state aggression, and the destruction carried out by agents in the governorate.

The RCC vice chairman then held an expanded meeting with the secretary and members of the command of the al-Ta'mim branch of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and the heads of security departments in the governorate. The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi, Defense Minister Staff General 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, Regional Command member Comrade Muhammad Yunis al-Ahmad, and Interior Minister Watban Ibrahim al-Hasan. They also discussed administrative, technical, and economic measures to secure a free and honorable life for the citizens.

At the end of the meeting the participants pledged to leader President Saddam Husayn that they will double their efforts, sacrifice, and work to preserve the gains of the glorious 17-30 July Revolution, to provide security for the citizens under his wise leadership, to continue

construction, and to prevent all the unjust and evil forces from achieving their despicable and wicked ambitions on the pure, sacred soil of Mesopotamia.

President Authorized To Suspend Desertion Measures

JN2103143292 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 19 Mar 92 p 1

[Revolution Command Council Decree No. 66 of 1992]

[Text] Decree No. 66, of 10 Ramadan 1412 hegira, corresponding to 4 March 1992.

In accordance with paragraph A, Clause 42 of the Constitution, the Revolution Command Council [RCC] decrees the following:

1. The president of the Republic is authorized to suspend legal measures taken against servicemen, conscripts, and reservists, both officers and soldiers, concerning the crimes of deserting Army service, failing to report to serve, and fleeing the country while in the military service.

2. This decree shall be published in the official gazette and takes effect the day that it is published.

[Signed] RCC Chairman Saddam Husayn

Interrogation Powers Transferred, Laws Amended

JN2003092292 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 18 Mar 92 pp 1, 5

[By unidentified AL-THAWRAH correspondent]

[Text] Justice Minister Shabib Lazim has declared that interrogation powers have been transferred from the Interior Ministry's Public Police Directorate to the Justice Ministry's judicial departments.

In a statement to AL-THAWRAH the minister said that this legal move has been adopted to emphasize the supremacy of the law and to enable police organs to devote their efforts to maintaining security and combating crime.

The minister added that 14 exceptional decisions and laws have been repealed headed by decisions 160 and 200 of 1984, decisions 420 and 521 of 1983, and decision 172 of 1989 which had been dictated by nature of the exceptional phase at that time.

The minister indicated that Justice Ministry committees have introduced 13 amendments to the civilian and penal code of procedure, the law on the custody of minors, and the real estate registration and transactions law. He affirmed that the amendments are aimed at facilitating citizens' dealings and providing legal service in a civilized manner in line with the country's comprehensive progress.

The justice minister affirmed that legal authorities of various specialties are extremely eager to protect citizens' freedom, to ensure sound legal decisions, and to establish justice in light of leader President Saddam Husayn's directives which assert the need to spread the principles of justice and law and to safeguard social and human rights.

25-, 50-Dinar Notes To Remain in Circulation

JN2403183892 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 23 Mar 92 pp 1, 2

[By Sana' al-Naqqash]

[Excerpt] Baghdad—[Finance Minister] Majid 'Abd Ja'far has denied any intention to take out of circulation any of the denominations currently in use such as the 25-dinar and the 50-dinar banknotes.

In a statement to AL-JUMHURIYAH the minister confirmed that there have been problems using the 100-dinar note because of its high value. He explained that for some time now Iraqi banks have been changing this into smaller denominations. In this regard he emphasized that the denominations in circulation draw their strength from the law and therefore can only be canceled by the law. He noted that taking a certain denomination out of circulation does not mean that that particular denomination is canceled. [passage omitted]

RCC Decree Increases Real Estate Bank Capital

JN2403143092 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] The Revolution Command Council [RCC] has decreed that the capital of the Real Estate Bank is to be increased from 1 billion to 1.1 billion dinars. It also has decreed that this increase will be used to make loans to government employees and the military. The following is the text of the decree:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

The Republic of Iraq, RCC Decree No. 71 dated 14 Ramadan, 1412 hegira, corresponding to 17 March 1992.

Decree: In accordance with the provisions of paragraph A of Article 42 of the Constitution, the RCC has decreed the following:

1. The Real Estate Bank's capital shall be increased from 1 billion to 1.1 billion dinars. This increase will be used to make loans to government employees and the military.

2. The increase shall be paid from the state treasury.

3. This decree shall be implemented as soon as it is published in the official gazette.

[Signed] Saddam Husayn, RCC chairman

Patriot Team Said Probing Other Issues

TA2603095892 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 26 Mar 92 p 2

[Report by military correspondent Dani Sade]

[Text] It is believed in the defense establishment that the investigation being conducted by the U.S. team is designed to resolve some unknown technical classified problem between the U.S. Army and Raytheon, the manufacturer of the Patriot missile. That observation was made yesterday by a senior Air Force officer to YEDI'OT AHARONOT.

"The consumer receives the Patriot missile in a closed case, a closed canister, which is inserted into the missile launcher, and that is how the missile is launched. The missile buyers have neither the permission nor the know-how nor the special tools to open the canisters. They do not need them, because the missile requires no preparation whatsoever before launch, except to be connected to the ignition system," said the senior officer.

"That is one of the nice things about that missile. The only occasions on which we saw the missile outside its canister were while we were studying it in the United States and, later, in flight. In Israel, all the canisters were sealed.

"We were not offended by the investigation itself—only by the way it was done. It was embarrassing. We realized that the team was here to check something specific, and we are positive this 'something' has absolutely nothing to do with Israel. The people who arrived here are professionals who know how to open a missile canister. They were looking for something specific; we do not know what. As far as we know, it has nothing to do with us. They could find nothing here, because there has been no mistake on our side."

The senior officer added that when the Air Force had difficulties with the equipment in the past, "we would turn to the Americans, tell them the missile's serial number as it appears on the canister, explain the problem, and get a solution by fax.

"If they had come to carry out an army-to-army, corps-to-corps investigation of what goes on here, they would have met with heads of our army, formed operational teams, and checked with us whatever it was they wanted to know. That is the way professional checks are usually made, and that is how things were done in the past. From what we have been able to understand, and from the secrecy they have been keeping, it appears they have come for some special purpose, something about which we are in the dark, but which clearly has nothing to do with us."

[An unattributed box on the same page of YEDI'OT AHARONOT adds: "All the canisters of the Patriot missiles in Israel's possession have been found sealed, just as the United States gave them to Israel. The U.S. delegation has practically completed its task and will leave Israel either today or tomorrow.

["Senior defense establishment figures said yesterday that the delegation was accorded full cooperation by every element dealing with the issue, both in the defense establishment and the Army."]

Rabin Urges U.S. To 'Admit Mistake' on Patriot

TA2503212292 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2100 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Labor Party Chairman Yitzhaq Rabin opposes giving in to a U.S. dictate over the loan guarantees affair. He said that the crisis in trust between the two countries can be overcome while remaining loyal to the principles that are important to Israel: the continuation of building in East Jerusalem and strengthening settlements in the Jordan Rift Valley. Rabin, however, opposes establishing settlements in highly populated areas.

Rabin said that the arrival of the U.S. mission in Israel to investigate whether Israel transferred Patriot missile technology to the PRC should not upset us, but we expect them to admit their mistake if they do not find anything and to announce that the charges the United States leveled against Israel are groundless. Rabin made the remarks tonight in an address to Labor Party activists in Jerusalem.

Arens Aide Sees Clear U.S. Signal Aiding Ties

TA2603121392 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 26 Mar 92

[Excerpt] The U.S. Administration is sending us a clear signal that its strategic relations with Israel are being maintained despite the probe of the Patriot missiles issue. These remarks were made today by Defense Ministry Director General David 'Ivri. 'Ivri and the U.S. ambassador attended a ceremony today marking the launch of an Israel Aircraft Industries [IAI] project to upgrade the American F-15's. Our army affairs correspondent 'Ido Baum heard their comments:

[Begin recording] [Baum] The ceremony at the IAI was attended by representatives of the defense establishment and of the U.S. Administration and Army, all standing side by side. Defense Ministry Director General David 'Ivri told reporters that this proves that the administration wishes to maintain smooth relations, while the Patriot probe—which is a different issue—continues.

['Ivri] I believe that this is particularly important today, when there are so many reports regarding the Patriot fact-finding team. It is important that all other channels of work, all other processes, continue as usual. I believe there is a very significant signal from the U.S. Administration here, which says: On the one hand, there is an investigation that must be handled; on the other, we are pursuing our commitments and relations between the defense establishments as they are. I believe this is a very clear signal.

[Baum] 'Ivri added that he does not know when the American team will complete its work, but it would only be fair for the Americans to convey the findings of the probe to Israel.

['Ivri] We have decided that our policy will be to assist and help them as much as possible on anything they request. They will tell us when they have completed the investigation, and I hope they will also tell us whether they found anything. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Arens Aide on Publication of Patriot Report

TA2503123592 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] At noon today the Defense Ministry still does not know whether the U.S. Administration will pass on to Israel the conclusions of the team investigating the Patriot missiles. Dani Nave, the defense minister's media adviser, reiterated to our military correspondent 'Ido Baum that the anti-Israeli U.S. reports are baseless. He expressed the hope that the administration will find a way to repair the damage caused to Israel's image.

[Begin recording] [Baum] The U.S. Administration is checking into the Patriot missiles issue—into reports on the sale of those missiles to the PRC—with a high degree of secrecy. The Defense Ministry does not know whether the conclusions of the U.S. investigators will be published when the team's work is done, and it is not even clear whether those conclusions will be relayed to Israel. Media adviser Dani Nave says the decision on publishing the conclusions will be the Americans', but Israel believes it should be done.

[Nave] I can imagine that since they talk of intelligence information involving anti-Israel suspicions on this issue, since this issue was greatly highlighted in the media, since they are waiting to see the results of this team's investigation, the Americans would have preferred, for their sake, to keep a low media profile, at least as long as the team is continuing its task. That can be their position later, as well, but the State of Israel is naturally interested. As the defense minister said on several occasions, the very existence of the false leaks against Israel's defense establishment has damaged Israel's image throughout the world. Damage has been done already.

[Baum] The U.S. team is concluding its work today and will probably leave for Washington tomorrow. Israeli sources said today that Israel will probably ask the Americans to publish the team's conclusions if they refute the wave of reports that damaged Israel's image. [end recording]

Olmert Says Bush To Blame for Chilly Relations

TA2603062692 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 26 Mar 92

[Text] The request of Health Minister Ehud Olmert, now in Washington, to meet with Vice President Dan Quayle was not granted. Is that another symptom of a crisis between Israel and the United States? 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports from Washington:

[Ben-'Ami] Here is how the story looks from the Israeli side: Health Minister Olmert's aides had prepared the minister's Washington visit, which was made in connection with a biannual seminar held by the two countries' health administrations. A request for a meeting with Vice President Dan Quayle was submitted. The U.S. response, according to Olmert's staff, was that the administration was refusing to arrange the meeting because of the troubled relations between the two countries, and that from now on there would be meetings only between official counterparts—between two health ministers, for instance.

From the American side, the situation looks different: There has been no decision to cancel or avoid meetings; the vice president is making frequent trips outside Washington as part of the election campaign, and there was apparently no time for a meeting.

Whatever the truth, last night Minister Olmert harshly criticized President Bush as the person he considers responsible for the deterioration of ties between the two countries. Bush's personal and hostile attitude toward the Israeli Government and its policy is a determining factor, claims Olmert. Bush, unlike his predecessors, has no feeling for Israel. He will accept no less than an Israeli withdrawal to the 1967 lines. If Israel says it is ready to freeze settlement, Bush will demand that the existing settlements be dismantled. Only complete withdrawal will satisfy him, and that is the reason for the chilly ties, asserts the health minister.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0600 GMT on 26 March, in a similar report by Washington-based correspondent Qeren Neubach, quotes Minister Olmert as saying yesterday in Washington: "The deterioration in Israeli-U.S. relations stems from President George Bush's personal approach to the State of Israel and its government, rather than from ideology or the termination of the cold war." Neubach adds: "According to Olmert, Bush has decided: I am the landlord of the world, and if there is a chance to achieve a settlement in the Middle East, I am obliged to do it. If they do not agree, I will show them."]

Shamir on Worldwide 'Embargo' on Guarantees

TA2503184492 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1705 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] We return to Israeli-U.S. relations. The prime minister said that the ties are good and that temporary misunderstandings will not undermine them. Yitzhaq Shamir addressed a Bar Mitzvah ceremony conducted by the Yad Lebanim organization for IDF [Israel Defense Forces] orphans. Gil Litman was there:

The first question presented to the prime minister was on the U.S. team which investigated whether Israel had

transferred Patriot missile technology to the PRC. Facing many television and newspaper correspondents, the prime minister replied:

[Begin recording] [Shamir] Those who thought they would find something now appreciate the real situation and will regret those notions.

[Litman] Sir, the crisis in relations with the United States—in your view is it directed by top echelons, and would you call the current administration hostile to Israel?

[Shamir] I would not use such terms. There are problems, there are certain misunderstandings, but the good and friendly relations are well established and very strong, and no temporary misunderstandings will undermine them.

[Litman] Sir, do you know about any U.S. intention to impose an international embargo on loan guarantees to Israel, as was published in one of this morning's newspapers?

[Shamir] Rubbish, rubbish published in one of the newspapers. [end recording]

Netanyahu on Embargo, U.S. Ties

TA2503161792 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Telephone interview with Binyamin Netanyahu, deputy minister at the Prime Minister's Office, by Uri Paz and Goni Mardor—live]

[Excerpt] [Mardor] Deputy Minister Binyamin Netanyahu is with us on the phone. Good evening, sir.

[Netanyahu] Good evening.

[Mardor] Is a worldwide boycott against Israel regarding the guarantees really forming?

[Netanyahu] I cannot say that it is. I can tell you that at this stage we have not received the guarantees from the United States, but I cannot confirm that this is systematically happening in other countries, certainly not the whole world.

[Paz] An appeal by Washington to the FRG, for example, is not new; it happened last year.

[Netanyahu] There were such reports in the past. I cannot confirm them. I can tell you that we have ways to find funds of various amounts. To be more precise, we can obtain guarantees for funds.

[Mardor] Where, Mr. Netanyahu?

[Netanyahu] Today, any country can get loans on the international money markets, which are essentially free, according to that country's economic ability. In fact, this is similar—though not identical—to a country's attempt to purchase goods or commodities. Money is a commodity; there are international markets where we could buy it.

[Paz] You said you are not confirming the reports. Are you not denying them as well?

[Netanyahu] I have no confirmation for such a report.

[Mardor] You must have a confirmation of, at least, the feeling that our relations with the United States are at an unprecedented low?

[Netanyahu] I have been dealing with this issue for many years, at least 10. Ever since I arrived at Israel's Embassy in Washington, I have been hearing such prophecies of doom that there is a rift between Israel and the United States and that it will never be mended again, and so on. Incidentally, I heard this during the time of Reagan, who headed an administration that was undoubtedly very friendly with Israel, when the Americans suspended the arms shipments to us following the war in Lebanon.

[Mardor] We are speaking, however, of the current Bush administration and the way it expresses its attitude toward us.

[Netanyahu] I wish to say that the prophecies of rifts tearing away at the fabric of our relations never came true, in the sense that the tissue has never been irreparably broken. The reason is simple: U.S. policy toward Israel is, after all, the result of U.S. people's wishes, as expressed through its administration and Congress. It is based on shared values. When the Americans look at this region—which, in a world that is getting more and more democratic, is not full of democracies—they see a region full of dictatorships: They see al-Qadhdhafi, al-Asad, Saddam Husayn, and 'Arafat. The American people and their representatives on Capitol Hill do not find it hard to realize that Israel is an island of democracy with which they share a basic value. Certainly there are disagreements, I will not deny that, but the basic partnership is founded on a rock that is far more solid than many believe.

[Paz] Meaning that the situation is tough, not terrible, and the current crisis will pass?

[Netanyahu] I believe that we have had a problem with the guarantees. The Americans keep making it clear—as we all heard the U.S. ambassador to Israel say—that there is no intention by anyone to harm or break the overall aid package. I believe that—for absolutely different reasons, which have nothing to do with us, but which are due to basic changes the U.S. economy is undergoing—by the end of this decade we will have to prepare ourselves for a reality in which U.S. aid will shrink, if not disappear altogether, for reasons which are not political at all. This forces us to change the Israeli economy and our way of life. This is in no way the result of political debates.

[Mardor] Will Yitzhaq Shamir attack the United States in the upcoming election campaign? The Jerusalem-based correspondent of THE NEW YORK TIMES reported yesterday that Shamir is considering a possible organized campaign against the U.S. Administration.

[Netanyahu] I see no sign of this. I also fail to see the logic of such a move. We have no intention of further exacerbating relations. Disagreements will be disagreements, and we will insist on our stands. [passage omitted]

Spokesman Denies Shots Fired at Vessel off Sidon

TA2503153992 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] A Beirut radio station reported that Lebanese Army soldiers opened machine gun fire at an Israeli Navy vessel which tried to get close to the shore off Sidon this afternoon.

The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman told our correspondent Shulamit Schmerling that he knows of no such incident.

Refusal To Talk With Diaspora Palestinians

TA2203114292 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 22 Mar 92 p A1

[Report by political correspondent 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Text] Israel has informed the United States that its representatives will not come to the multilateral meeting on refugees—which is due to convene in Ottawa, Canada, in May—if the Palestinian delegation includes representatives from the diaspora.

The United States promised the Palestinian delegation that representatives from the diaspora would be permitted to participate in the talks on the refugee issue, as well as in the talks on economic cooperation, despite Israel's opposition. That promise might prevent negotiations on those issues from continuing.

This week a representative of the Canadian Government, which is leading the talks on refugees, is due to arrive in the region. The representative, Michael Bell, until recently his country's ambassador to Israel, will tour the Arab capitals. Later in the week he will hold talks with senior officials in Jerusalem. The Canadians are busy preparing for the meeting, although Israel turned down Secretary of State James Baker's request to reconsider its opposition to the participation of the Palestinian diaspora in the talks. The Americans and Canadians are now looking for a compromise formula that would enable the forum to convene with the participation of Israel and Palestinian representatives from outside the territories.

The foreign ministers of the Arab countries will decide this week whether to accept the Israeli proposal to convene the next round of bilateral talks in late April. They will also have to decide whether to agree to the U.S. request to present lists of preferred sites after the next round of talks in Washington, Israel's condition for participation in that round.

Political sources in Jerusalem said that in the past few days there has been a softening in the Arab position on moving the talks to Europe, and it is possible that the parties will meet for another round in one of the European capitals even prior to the Knesset elections.

Shamir Raises Water Quotas Against Expert Advice

TA2503125492 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, who is currently acting agriculture minister, has accepted the recommendation of his adviser Mikha'el Deqel to raise the water quotas for farmers following the rainy winter. Our correspondent Ya'aqov Balsenboim reports that the decision runs contrary to the opinion of Water Commissioner Dan Zazlavsky.

Professor 'Ezra Sadan will replace Agriculture Minister Director General Gad Shalitin. The appointment is valid for three months, or in other words until after the elections.

Direct Dialing to 11 Arab Countries To Begin

TA2503163392 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] A direct-dial service to 11 Arab countries will be available starting at midnight tonight [2200 GMT]. This afternoon Communications Minister Refa'el Pinhasi signed an order activating the service, allowing the Bezeq Telecommunications Company to establish the telephone link. Among the countries we will be able to dial to as of tonight, probably, will be Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Tunisia, and Yemen. The charge, if you are interested, will be 7.80 new Israeli shekels [approximately $3.25] per minute. The country codes can be obtained from Bezeq operators, who go on strike tomorrow.

Defense Establishment Views Hamas-Fatah Conflict

TA2303141492 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 23 Mar 92 p A2

[Report by Eytan Rabin]

[Text] Several days ago, Major General Dani Rothschild, coordinator of government activities in the territories, held a closed debate which was described as classified and which was attended by heads of the civil administrations and the governors of the territories. The meeting dealt with the growing tension between Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Fatah—tension that worries the defense establishment.

The participants were asked to express their opinions on the questions of whether the defense establishment should intervene in the conflict and whether it should modify its policy on that issue. The participants concurred with Major General Rothschild's view that the civil administration heads should not become directly involved in the historical conflict between the organizations, although they should closely monitor the process. This was the first time the defense establishment has ever debated this issue.

One of the arguments voiced at the meeting was that intervention by the civil administration cannot affect the situation significantly. At the same time, elements who participated in the debate said that if the violence between the two organizations increases, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will intervene and impose a curfew.

The participants reviewed the growing tension between Hamas and Fatah in the wake of the recent Ramallah Chamber of Commerce elections, in which Hamas won 10 out of 11 seats. The result set off an alarm in the PLO, which considered setting up a special committee to probe the issue.

Another factor behind the tension between the organizations—which is apparent mainly in the Gaza Strip and in the areas of Hebron, Nabulus, and Tulkarm—are the peace talks, which Hamas vehemently opposes. Last month there were two fierce clashes between Hamas and Fatah, in one, a Fatah man was assassinated in the West Bank.

Brigadier General Gadi Zohar, head of the West Bank Civil Administration, told HA'ARETZ that the meeting was an internal debate and that its details are classified. A senior defense establishment figure has said that for some time now the defense establishment has been following the rising strength of the Hamas movement with concern and that, if the need arises, steps such as arrests will be taken.

Hamas Opens Amman Office To Aid West Bank

TA2303123692 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 23 Mar 92 p 2

[Report by Pinhas 'Inbari]

[Text] Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] has begun embracing the PLO's political ways. It recently opened an office in Amman that will aid the territories along the lines of the aid provided by the PLO. According to sources in the territories, the office is called "The Jordanian Islamic Committee for the Territories" and has departments dealing with land, economy, housing, support for the families of prisoners and martyrs, religious affairs and mosques, and so forth. Thus, in light of its accusations against the PLO that it abets corruption, Hamas will now compete with the PLO over granting aid to the territories.

UN Compensation Sought for Gulf Returnees

JN2303203292 Dubayy AL-BAYAN in Arabic 22 Mar 92 p 7

[Text] Amman—AL-BAYAN has learned that the Jordanian Government has asked the UN fund for compensating damage inflicted on countries and individuals as a result of the Iraqi forces' occupation of Kuwait, to give $50,000 to each Jordanian citizen who lost their job as a result of this occupation.

Jordanian Government sources said the UN committee had proposed compensating anyone who lost his job as a result of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait with only $2,500, but the Jordanian Government refused the proposal and demanded the same compensation for immigrants from Kuwait to Jordan, as for Jewish immigrants from the CIS—the former Soviet Union—which is $50,000 each.

Observers believe that this Jordanian position will cause tension in Jordanian-Iraqi relations, because the Security Council resolution on compensations says that Iraq shall pay those harmed by its occupation of Kuwait.

The Jordanian Government will ask, within a few days, for compensation for damage inflicted on its economy as a result of the occupation. The Jordanian Government has estimated the damage at $4.5 to 5 billion.

Developments in Regional Peace Process Noted

JN2403101292 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 24 Mar 92 p 30

[Text] Amman—AL-RA'Y—Well-informed sources have said that next April will witness diplomatic and political moves on both the Arab and international levels.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker is expected to make a tour of a number of the region's states following the 'Id al-Fitr holiday. Baker will hold consultations and contacts to follow up the peace process, and fix the venue of the next round of negotiations after Washington.

The sources said that it is now certain that the fifth round of Arab-Israeli negotiations will be held in Washington during the last 10 days of April.

The water and refugees committees emanating from the multilateral peace conference are expected to hold their first meeting in Austria or Turkey, and their second meeting in Canada in late April or early May.

It is noteworthy that the foreign ministers of the four Arab countries negotiating with Israel will meet on 1 April to evaluate the peace process and coordinate among themselves.

Official Denies Conversing With Elat Counterpart

JN2303112992 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 0910 GMT 23 Mar 92

[Text] Al-'Aqabah, 23 Mar (PETRA)—Al-'Aqabah Mayor Ibrahim 'Abd-al-Razzaq Abu-al-'Izz has emphasized that he has had no telephone contact with the mayor of Elat.

In a statement to the JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY, he said he received a telephone call at 1730 Saturday evening, through a third country, from a person who spoke in English. Another person, translating into Arabic, told him he was invited to participate in the coastal cities' conference in Elat.

Abu-al-'Izz said that he protested the call, turned down the invitation, and immediately hung up when the speaker asked him to hold on in order to talk to the mayor of Elat.

Efforts To Combat Drug Trafficking Reviewed

JN2303081292 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 21 Mar 92 p 5

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter P.V. Vivekanand]

[Text] Amman—Jordanian law enforcement agencies are keeping a tight grip on the flow of drugs from the north to the south, through the Kingdom, but need further advanced infrastructure and facilities to bring the situation under complete control, according to officials and senior police sources.

Among the countries in the region, Jordanian anti-narcotics authorities enjoy the reputation of being the most efficient, a fact acknowledged by international organisations and foreign governments. However, the very fact that drug trafficking is highly lucrative, bringing in five-fold returns, attracts many into the trade works against the authorities' efforts, officials say.

On many occasions in the past, smugglers were found to be fully armed and did not hesitate to engage anti-narcotics agents in shootouts in the desert, Jordanian police records show.

"Higher speed vehicles suitable for the desert are a favourite with smugglers and this means that the drug enforcement officials have to equip themselves with more powerful interception vehicles, and, in some cases, helicopters to chase them," said an official.

The official noted that statistics indicated that drug-smuggling operations had gone down during and shortly after the Gulf crisis as a result of the heightened measures imposed on borders by the various countries in the region. But the flow picked up again since May 1991, when some normalcy was established in border movements after the war over Kuwait.

"This indicates that smugglers and anti-narcotics agents went back to their normal work," observed the official.

Jordan has enforced strict laws and provisions in the penal code to consolidate the fight against drugs. Despite this, drugs like heroin and opium appear to have been added to the list of traditional hashish being smuggled through the Kingdom in the past two or three years, according to a summary of drug seizures in 1989, 1990

and 1991. Seizures of heroin amounted to 19.79 kilogrammes in 1991, compared to seven kilogrammes in 1989 and 22 kilogrammes in 1990.

As a rule, any special amnesty or pardon for prisoners excludes those serving sentences for drug-related crimes.

An important part of the Jordanian effort against drugs is the rehabilitation of addicts at a national centre attached to al-Fuhays mental health hospital.

According to experts on the regional situation, the "price factor" could serve as parameter to judge the effectiveness of the anti-narcotics campaign.

A kilogramme of hashish, known as cannabis in the West, fetches about JD [Jordanian dinars] 300 to JD 400 in Lebanon, where it is grown. In Jordan the price is about JD 1,000 and in Saudi Arabia it is about JD 5,000.

"There has been little change in these prices in the past year and so far this year," said a senior police official. "It indicates that the situation has not changed much during this period. If the prices go up at the consuming end, it means that the smuggling is more difficult," explained the official, who preferred anonymity.

According to an annual brief on the drug situation in Jordan, as long as the demand remains high in Egypt and Saudi Arabia as well as other Gulf states, Jordan has the serious problem of having to be always on the alert against drug trafficking through its territory.

"Drug traffickers use any and every means to transport and smuggle drugs from source areas in Lebanon through Syria and Jordan to their market destinations," notes the report. The methods used by the smugglers range from small envelopes containing a few grammes of heroin to pouches hidden within the human body or camels, to a speedy rubber boat with canabis, it says.

"Elaborately prepared" places of concealment in vegetable trucks going to the Gulf are also used by the traffickers, who use their awareness of the various interception methods used by anti-narcotics agents and the Customs Department to switch from one form of carrier to another, according to the report.

Border patrols of the Armed forces and strict customs inspection at entry points also go to a large extent to contribute to the efforts of the anti-narcotics bureau.

The volume of cannabis seized by Jordanian authorities in 1990 and 1989 amounted to 10,909 kilogrammes in 150 interceptions, reflecting a dramatic increase from the total of 6,803 kilogrammes in 644 operations between 1981 and 1989.

Well-informed sources noted that a case detected in mid-80s revealed that a senior anti-narcotics official was involved in drug-smuggling operations and in the early and mid-1980s and this could partly account for the relatively low number of drug interceptions during that period.

The official was exposed and sentenced to prison and since then the Anti-Narcotics Department underwent a serious overhaul.

Reflecting on Jordan's record in fighting drug trafficking, the United Nations subcommission on illicit drug traffic and related matters has paid tribute to Jordanian authorities and its extending assistance.

However, as the smugglers resort to more and more innovative ways of concealment and methods to carry the drugs, Jordanian anti-narcotics agents face further problems to monitor the 1,200 kilometres of its borders in the north, east and south. Compounding the difficulties is the desert nature of the terrain covered, which requires more advanced vehicles, aircraft and surveliance and control equipment, according to the annual brief on the drug situation in the Kingdom.

Scarce financial resources to reward informants and "plant" agents in drug-smuggling gangs are also impeding the operations of the anti-narcotics authorities in Jordan.

"It is no secret that some of the druglords operate with capitals higher that the annual budgets of some countries in the region," noted a lawyer familiar with drug hauls interception in Jordan. "It is ironic that they have more money at their disposal than some of the anti-narcotics departments to help them evade most obstacles and employ better methods to carry out their operations."

Within Jordan, it is the observation of most official and police as well as doctors that drug consumption has not yet posed a threat of any serious magnitude and is limited to what one expert described as "light-type" drugs.

But the dramatic rise in population in the past 18 months in the wake of the Gulf crisis has warranted a new alert, senior official say.

According to a senior police source, "some cases of hard drug usage were detected in the past few months in Jordan and we believe that this could be partly attributed to returnees."

The source noted that drug consumption and addiction are widespread in many Gulf states and pointed out that some of the returnees "could have brought their habits with them."

However, there are many who believe that a serious drug problem could be growing in the country.

"Judging by the size of interceptions that we have and in view of the country' geographical location, it is only logical that there are drug users in the country," noted one expert. "It is highly possible that what we see or hear of drug use in Jordan is only the tip of an iceberg."

The expert also observed that "most users keep their habits or addiction as a secret and the available statistics could very well be a very small percentage of the actual size.

"The simple truth is that we don't really know to any degree of accuracy the number of drug users in Jordan."

Leaders Return From Damascus Summit Meeting

NC2503174792 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1645 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] The four-day Damascus talks focusing on the government situation—during which no information was disclosed—ended today. The three leaders have returned to Beirut. The first to return was Prime Minister 'Umar Karami, followed by Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni, who will hold a news conference shortly to explain the outcome of the Damascus talks. Karami will also hold a news conference later this evening. President Ilyas al-Hirawi arrived in Beirut after al-Husayni and Karami, and proceeded to the temporary presidential residence.

The government situation will become clearer following the trio's return. AFP has reported that the Lebanese and Syrian presidents reached full agreement on all the subjects which they discussed yesterday and today in Damascus.

Karami: 'No Reason' for Government Change

NC2503202092 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1915 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Prime Minister 'Umar Karami affirmed that the present government will continue until parliamentary elections are held.

[Begin Karami recording] There is no doubt, as we have often said, that there is a plot in Lebanon, directed against the achievements made last year and the entire national accord process. This plot ultimately has taken the form of starving the people. There was full agreement to continue the present process and to implement as soon as possible what has not yet been implemented of the al-Ta'if Accord, and to adopt all the necessary measures, however painful and difficult they may be, to deal with this plot.

You will remember that last Saturday we said there will be no government reshuffle. This government was established for known reasons and to complete the al-Ta'if process. I see no reason for change. There are some who seek change in order to become ministers. They want this government to go as soon as possible. I want to affirm that elections will take place at the beginning of this summer. An elections bill will be sent to the Chamber of Deputies within two weeks. This may happen even earlier. The government will stay in office until the elections. Let those who want to rush matters be reassured. [end recording]

Views Administrative Appointments

NC2503192592 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1900 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Upon his return from Damascus, President al-Hirawi met with businessman Rafiq al-Hariri.

Prime Minister 'Umar Karami held a press conference this evening, in which he announced that there will be no change or replacements in the government. He said there was full agreement on the need to continue the reconciliation process, to implement what has not been implemented, and to take the necessary measures to restore normalcy.

Touching on administrative appointments, he said there has been an agreement on the positions, and that very soon—within a week or two—this issue will be settled.

He also announced that there will be elections in early summer, and that the government will stay until the elections are held. He said the Council of Ministers will meet tomorrow evening.

Al-Husayni: Current Government 'Necessity'

NC2503190792 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni said that the government, in its present form, is capable of achieving the goals outlined by the National Accord Charter. Speaking at a news conference he held this evening, upon his return from the Damascus Lebanese-Syrian summit talks, Speaker al-Husayni said it is unfair to say that this government caused the economic crisis. He said that the crisis has existed; it is a political, security, and psychological crisis. Speaker al-Husayni added: Any attempt to frustrate our efforts to complete our march means a return to the situation which existed before. He said: We must view this government as a necessity.

The Chamber of Deputies speaker denied the existence of any differences among himself, the prime minister, and the president. He said: We must have solidarity, in order to overcome all the difficulties and to change any differences of opinion into agreement.

Speaker al-Husayni asked: Why do we want to give the public unrealistic and incorrect impressions? He added that any government change or reshuffle must be justified, noting that we are currently being subjected to an Israeli onslaught and rumors.

He affirmed that compared to Lebanon's debt—which totals 2.6 trillion pounds—the state owns property and assets with great commercial value. Let us listen to some of Speaker al-Husayni's statement:

[Begin recording] [Al-Husayni] Whoever proposes a government change or reshuffle must also propose the goals he wants to achieve. Then we can examine whether this proposal is the way to achieve these new goals. But if the goals are the same as those outlined in the national accord, this government—in its present form and with the parties that constitute the primary partners in this march—is capable of achieving these goals.

[Unidentified correspondent] Those who demand the resignation of this government, Mr. Speaker, have based

their demand on two issues: The first is the inconsistency and sharp differences among its members, and the second is that this government has led the country into a very serious economic situation.

[Al-Husayni] The first part of the question—the arguments or justifications—is inherent in the answer. It is known that the government is a government of national accord. It is known that we agreed in al-Ta'if to include all the parties in this government when making difficult decisions which even normal governments could not make. Therefore, based on the same justifications, I believe that this government must continue. Regarding the second part, I think that it is unfair to say that this government caused the economic crisis, for two reasons. The first is that the crisis has existed and continues to exist. It is not economic, it is a political, security, and psychological crisis. Also, when we accomplish the goals outlined by the national accord document, we can emerge from our crisis. As a result of the work of this government, many positive results have been achieved in terms of obtaining relative security. For those who want to forget, I am one of those who hopes very much to forget the tragedies and negative details of the past. But we must not forget the lessons. We have learned lessons, which we must take into consideration. [end recording]

Buwayz on Syrian Summit, Government, Peace Talks

NC2503112892 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz said in a television interview last night that the Arab parties to the peace talks will ask for a significant U.S. presence wherever the next round of peace talks are held. He added, however, that he expects the negotiations to remain stalled if talks are resumed before the Israeli elections.

Commenting on the recent Lebanese-Syrian summit, he said: I believe the summit dealt with how to strengthen the government position and the situation in the south. It is no secret that Syria can play an effective role in the south.

The minister also discussed the possibility of a new government, saying: The government formed more than a year ago is primarily a political one. The government was formed at a time when the armed militias were supposed to be disbanded. The solution had to be peaceful because Lebanon had gone through enough war, ruin, and destruction. The militias had to be given a new political rostrum instead of the military one. That was the price for ending the civil war in Lebanon.

Buwayz also commented on the peace talks and Resolution 425, noting: We believe that the peace talks are in a positive phase that might influence the implementation of this resolution. Resolution 425 was almost buried and forgotten; however, there is hope that it will be implemented. Lebanon's participation in the peace conference is better than not being involved in the international arena. There are, of course, other factors that prompted us to participate in the conference.

He added: Israeli talk about a peace treaty in return for implementing Resolution 425 deprives this resolution of its essence, because the resolution calls for Israel's unconditional withdrawal from Lebanon, meaning that there is no price for implementing it. This is the essence of the resolution. The Israelis insist on raising this point because they want a peace treaty in return for their withdrawal. We have said that Resolution 425 is unconditional and must be fully implemented. Resolution 242 has a price: peace. What is necessary is that Resolution 425 be implemented. When Resolutions 242 and 338 are implemented, we and the other Arab countries will be ready for peace.

Israeli Threats 'Could Be Serious'

NC2203073892 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 22 Mar 92

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has said that the Israeli threats to Lebanon could be serious. He pointed out that the situation in the south could deteriorate. He confirmed that the reasons for the violence there are the continuing Israeli excesses, the oppression Israel imposes on this area, and the deprivation of the people's rights.

Buwayz pointed out that the Foreign Ministry is holding contacts with Washington regarding the threats made to Lebanon.

Buwayz, speaking after a meeting with EC ambassadors in Lebanon, added that advancing the peace conference is the guarantee for stopping the violence. He clarified that the cordon states [states bordering Israel] meeting will take place tentatively on 1 April, but that this date could be changed.

Minister on Economy, Hizballah Agreement

NC2203190492 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1700 GMT 22 Mar 92

[Text] Minister 'Abdallah al-Amin has criticized the government's method of dealing with the economic crisis. Al-Amin also mentioned that he obtained an agreement from the Hizballah secretary general that no rockets will be fired from the liberated areas in the south against occupied Palestine. This came in a speech al-Amin delivered at a dinner banquet held in his honor at al-Ghaziyah in the south last night.

Al-Amin said: The bitter experiences that Lebanon had between independence in 1943 and April 1975 shows that the system cannot survive forever. The Lebanese state that existed in 1943 belonged to rich landowners, not to the entire population. Therefore, we need to build the sound administration we never had.

Al-Amin added: Israel wants to undermine the Lebanese banking system, which has managed to survive so far

despite the difficulties. The government should, even belatedly, design a comprehensive plan for economic reform that utilizes Lebanon's own resources. If the state nedds to borrow, let it be. But the money borrowed by the government should not find its way into the pockets of middlemen and certain ministers. It should be used in feasible economic projects and in rebuilding the infrastructure.

Hizballah Secretary: Resistance 'Only Way'

NC2303072392 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 23 Mar 92

[Text] His eminence Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah, Hizballah secretary general, emphasized that resistance is the only way to liberate the occupied lands, since negotiations will not restore the land or rights, but will serve the interests of America and the enemy.

In a speech delivered at a fast-breaking banquet in the al-Rasul al-A'zam mosque yesterday, Nasrallah called on everyone to make the resistance the entire nation's choice, rather than that of a certain party or sect.

Nasrallah met yesterday with a delegation representing Fatah, the Revolutionary Council, led by Mansur Hamdan, and discussed developments, particularly in the south. He also received a delegation representing the families of persons kidnapped by the Lebanese Forces and handed over to Israel. They discussed the issue of kidnapped persons, asserting that progress has been made since Israel has admitted to holding kidnapped persons.

'Fully Prepared' for Martyrdom

LD2603095292 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Referring to the recent actions of the Zionist regime's forces in Lebanon, Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah, the leader of the Lebanese Hizballah revolutionary movement, stated: Islamic Resistance forces are fully prepared to be martyred in the fight against any act of aggression by the regime occupying Jerusalem; and to deal another heavy blow to the forces of that regime.

Fadlallah Discusses Peace Talks, U.S. Role

NC2103204792 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1300 GMT 21 Mar 92

[Interview with 'Allamah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah by Khalid al-'Ali; place, date not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Al-'Ali] Israel is talking about the need to protect its northern areas through a security agreement, and refuses to take UN Security Council Resolution 425 as the basis. The government, on the other hand, promises to protect these areas. Do you think that this is a true reflection of the situation?

[Fadlallah] I imagine that this political debate between the ruling group in Lebanon and the Zionist officials is designed to create a certain psychological atmosphere to mobilize the people against the resistance. Israel is insinuating that the basic problem in the south is not the occupation; it is saying that protecting Israel against the extremist resistance forces is the real problem. It is presenting the matter just as the Israeli negotiators presented it to the Lebanese side. They try to pretend that the issue is not one of occupation, but a security matter that has nothing to do with politics. It is natural for Lebanon to tackle the issue from the perspective that the issue is one of resisting occupation.

The whole matter is an attempt to cover up for well-studied arrangements, which are being worked out secretly within the context of the Syrian-U.S. tug of war. We do not believe, therefore, that what is being said in public is the same as what is being discussed behind the scenes. We think that there is a Lebanese-Israeli-U.S. plan to circumvent the resistance at the popular level, by making insinuations involving the complex and bloody situation in the south. We note that some Lebanese politicians are playing a game, pitting the U.S. Embassy against Damascus.

[Al-'Ali] With September approaching, the Americans have started to reiterate that the Syrians need to leave Lebanon. They also raise issues such as terrorism, drugs, and hostages, and warn about holding parliamentary elections before the necessary security conditions exist. How do you analyze the American involvement?

[Fadlallah] I think the American approach is to say one thing while they are thinking something else. We notice that America is discussing the issue of the Syrian withdrawal to al-Biqa' in September; is commenting on the parliamentary elections; and is making statements on drugs, hostages, terrorism, and so on. All this is designed to influence the Syrian stand on the peace negotiations. America was offended by the Syrian absence from the multilateral talks, which had a bearing on Lebanese participation in these talks, as well as by complications in the bilateral talks. All this political pressure on Syria in the media does not mean that America is concerned about the Syrian withdrawal to al-Biqa', that it senses extraordinary danger if the Lebanese parliamentary elections are held, or that it is concerned about the drug issue. [passage omitted]

America tries to pressure Syria in all these matters to influence the Syrian stand on the negotiations, so that the U.S. will get what it wants out of them. [passage omitted]

[Al-'Ali] On the regional and international level, negotiations are taking place which America wants to keep under the spotlight, at least until the U.S. elections are held. What these negotiations do for the Arabs is clear for anyone who wants to understand. What can the Arabs do to combat this U.S. insistence on continuing these apparently futile negotiations?

[Fadlallah] The Arab problem is that they are living under the influence of an intimidating U.S. statement: That any party that closes the door to the negotiations will be responsible for destroying the regional peace process. This is a responsibility no group wants to take. America is insinuating, through certain Arabs within the U.S. circle of influence, that the Arabs should deprive Israel of the chance to complicate things by not walking out of the negotiations, something that would be seen as an Israeli victory over the Arabs in the international arena.

This statement made the Arabs seek negotiations, and suffer humiliation at Israeli hands and U.S. gratification of Israel, which gives the latter more winning cards. The problem is that Arabs feel weak, and think that America is their source of strength in negotiations. If al-Sadat gave America 99 percent of the winning cards, the Arabs are now giving it the remaining one percent. If they could give America more, they would.

The Arabs have already experienced a political fall in this regard. Syria is the only nation trying to withstand the great pressure being put on it. America is now trying to surround Syria at the Arab level.

I believe that America wants to achieve something by keeping the negotiations going, even though it is well aware that they will lead nowhere. The role of these negotiations is not to resolve the problems, but to prepare the Arab mentality to accept the Israeli presence as a fait acompli. That is why we find U.S. officials saying that they achieved a lot by simply bringing together the parties. [passage omitted]

Hizballah Commentary Assails 'Jewish Criminality'

NC2203101192 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 22 Mar 92

[Station commentary: "Threats Will Not Frighten Us"]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Israel threatens, promises, predicts, and warns as if the land has been abandoned by its people, who have been arrested only to be killed at the hands of the Zionists, as if people other than the Zionists and Jews must die or be killed; as if the Jews have the right to flex their muscles, terrorize, attack, kill, and violate the honor of others; while these others must surrender, submit to their will, and accept this Zionist-imposed fate.

All this Zionist machismo and clamor of Jewish threats is because the strugglers in Palestine avenged their brothers and killed three aggressive Zionist soldiers; because another Muslim Palestinian mujahid avenged his father's death in a Jewish prison, killing and injuring numerous Jews in Jaffa, using the sword of dignity and pride; because the Islamists in Turkey, who tasted the bitterness of Jewish Zionist infiltration there, killed a Zionist spy network official to avenge the blood of the innocent, and to defend the dignity and honor of Muslims in Turkey; and because other Muslims, who wanted to tell the world to end the Zionist terrorism, and who wanted to avenge the blood of many Muslim and Arab martyrs in Palestine, south Lebanon, and the Syrian Golan Heights, blew up the enemy's embassy in Argentina.

This is the issue from the victims' point of view—those who have been killed, those who are described as terrorists but who are terrorism's first victims, and those who are permanently threatened as they try to defend themselves and their honor—nothing more.

As for the issue seen by the aggressing enemy, where do we start? More importantly, where do we stop? Do we start with the Zionists' daily operations of murder and terrorism in occupied Palestine, against the land's rightful owners and people? Or should we start with the series of daily crimes, which have become perpetual in south Lebanon, where bombs are constantly fired at villages, vales, and fields; and where the enemy practices every aggression and crime against the southerners? Maybe we should start with the terrible Zionist piracy against the master and guardian of the Islamic Resistance martyrs, the exuberant martyr Sayyid 'Abbas al-Musawi and his son. Should we begin with the scorched earth which the Zionists editorialize in their media—a policy they practice in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the south, and western al-Biqa'? We could start with the horror stories and reports of Jewish terrorism and Zionist crimes, which started many years ago and which continue today. We must go back centuries to read the Jewish history of hostility to humanity and mankind—from the first prophet they killed; through all their group massacres, carnage, and indescribable crimes; to today's acts.

If some who reject this Zionist oppression and Jewish criminality are performing part of their duty, there are many among the sons of the Islamic nation who want to wage war against this enemy wherever he may be. We see this happening in Palestine, Lebanon, Turkey, and elsewhere. Undoubtedly, it is the beginning of the march of continuing response and activity to resist the Zionist entity.

We believe that if the Zionists continue their aggression and terrorism, they will see what they never expected to see and will bitterly regret their deeds. The pious shall triumph.

Israeli Shelling Reported; No Casualties

NC2603095192 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 26 Mar 92

[Text] REUTER has reported that intermittent clashes involving artillery and katyusha rockets took place between Israeli forces and the Islamic Resistance on the western al-Biqa' axis last night and this morning, without any casualties.

The agency said approximately 30 Israeli shells landed in Birkat Jabbur, and eight katyusha rockets fell in Kawkaba, al-Ahmadiyah, and al-Rayhan, in the border strip.

Citing an Islamic Resistance source, the agency said the clashes broke out when Israeli military concentrations—including tanks, vehicles, and bulldozers—were monitored in al-Ahmadiyah and al-Rayhan.

According to witnesses, Israeli reconnaissance aircraft were roaming the skies of western al-Biba' this morning.

Villagers Flee

NC2603110392 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 26 Mar 92

[Text] Southern Lebanon is again at the forefront of security events. Intermittent clashes with artillery and katyusha rockets have taken place between fundamentalist forces and the Israeli Army and South Lebanese Army [SLA].

A Western news agency said that about 7,000 people have fled eight Lebanese villages near the areas that were targeted by Israeli artillery fire. It said damage was caused to houses and fields, but there was no report on casualties.

In another development, an explosive charge was detonated in Kafr Huna, al-Rayhan District, as an SLA patrol was passing at dawn today. SLA sources said the explosion killed two civilians.

The Islamic Resistance announced that one of its units ambushed an SLA mechanized patrol on Kafr Huna-'Aramta Road in Jazzin at 0800 today. It said a fierce clash broke out between the two sides, killing or wounding all members of the patrol.

The outskirts of Jba', 'Ayn Bu Siwar, and Jabal Safi have been under intermittent artillery fire since 1015 today. Al-Nabatiyah was subjected to 155-mm artillery shelling this morning.

'Resistance' Claims Ambush of Militia Patrol

NC2603103592 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 26 Mar 92

[Text] The Islamic Resistance has announced that a group of its fighters ambushed an agent mechanized patrol consisting of one armored personnel carrier and a half-track on the Kafr Huna-'Aramta road in the Jazzin area at 0805 today. Fierce fighting ensued between resistance fighters and the patrol. The two armored vehicles were destroyed, and all crew members were either killed or wounded.

Israeli radio said a short while ago that an exchange of gunfire took place between the Israeli Army and Hizballah members in the south last night. The radio said that eight katyusha rockets fell on the occupied border strip, noting that Israeli Army artillery bombarded Hizballah positions in al-Biqa'.

Civilian Casualties Reported

NC2603105092 (Clandestine) Voice of the South in Arabic to Lebanon 1030 GMT 26 Mar 92

[Text] Our military correspondent has reported that saboteurs killed two citizens from Kafr Huna this morning. The victims are Shafiq Shahin, a Christian, and Latif Kurayyim, a Shiite.

The saboteurs ambushed a patrol of the South Lebanese Army on the Kafr Huna road today. The saboteurs clashed with the patrol, but then fled. The two citizens, who were working in their fields, were shot in the back by the retreating saboteurs.

Al-Asad, Lebanese Leaders Continue Talks

JN2503153592 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad and Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi resumed their talks at the Presidential Palace at 1200 today.

The meeting was attended on the Lebanese side by Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni and Prime Minister 'Umar Karami; and on the Syrian side by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi.

During this meeting, they completed discussion of the topics that were raised in the previous meetings. There was full agreement on all issues of mutual interest.

Libya Sanctions Termed 'Unjustified Provocation'

JN2603080292 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 26 Mar 92

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "Justice Is Indivisible," AL-THAWRAH says in one of its articles that the hasty use of the UN Security Council to issue a resolution imposing economic, diplomatic, military, or any other measures against Libya will have negative reflections and serious implications.

It will be considered an unjustified provocation not only against Libya, but also against the Arabs. Such a resolution, says the paper, will by no means serve the credibility of international legitimacy or the United Nations.

'Slow Improvement' in Ties With Iraq

PM2503134792 London AL-QUDS AL'ARABI in Arabic 24 Mar 92 p 1

["Exclusive" report: "Syria Gradually Opens Its Borders with Iraq; al-Asad Received Message from Saddam Urging Coordination"]

[Excerpt] London—There has been slow improvement in Syrian-Iraqi relations, reflected in the official opening of borders to goods and trade between the two countries, and in the appearance of calls in Syria for more openness to Iraq and for the revivial of the pan-Arab charter introduced in 1979.

Diplomatic sources have told AL-QUDS AL'ARABI that an Iraqi envoy arrived in Damascus in recent weeks with a message from Iraqi President Saddam Husayn to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad related to specific coordination steps, and that the message was still under discussion.

President al-Asad, the sources emphasized, is now convinced that the peace negotiations sponsored by Washington will never lead to an acceptable settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and he has expressed resentment of the fact that Syria is still on the terrorism list, that Washington is continuing its attempts to isolate Damascus, the fact that some Gulf states have not fulfilled their financial commitments to Syria, and that the hopes pinned on the Damascus Declaration for the promotion of an effective Arab economic and security order have evaporated. The sources also said that the regional and national commands of the Syrian Ba'th Party met recently and discussed the need for a revision of recent Syrian policies, for openness to Iraq, and for a renewal of the attempts to implement the 1979 pan-Arab charter.

According to earlier Western reports, Syria has prepared the Iraqi pipeline on its territory for operation, and has begun regular maintenance work on it.

President al-Asad has opposed the use of force against Iraq for noncompliance with the UN Security Council resolutions calling for the destruction of its missiles and other weapons. He also refused to host an Iraqi opposition conference aimed at overthrowing the Baghdad regime. [passage omitted]

Afghanistan

Najibollah Meets UN's Sevan 24 Mar

LD2403233392 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] The presidential press office has reported to BAKHTAR that esteemed President Najibollah received His Excellency Benon Sevan, assistant and special envoy of the UN secretary general, today. Mr. Sevan thanked President Najibollah for his full and sincere cooperation in implementing the UN peace plan. He presented a report to the esteemed president on recent developments in the situation, on his talks with parties concerned and Afghan circles, and on measures for the completion of preparations for [words indistinct]. Esteemed Najibollah later expressed pleasure at the UN preparations for the implementation of its peace plan for Afghanistan and asked that the United Nations expand and accelerate its efforts in this respect. The esteemed president said: Our people are utterly tired of fighting and peace is the great and urgent need of Afghan society. Any kind of effort in this respect has the approval of all Afghan people. Esteemed Najibollah added: The recent declaration by the president of Afghanistan clearly showed that the Republic of Afghanistan not only took practical steps to restore peace and [word indistinct] but is also ready for any kind of cooperation in this respect. Now all parties concerned should avoid (?acts) which put group, party, and factional interests before national interests, while expressing good intentions. They should join the United Nations in its efforts to restore nationwide lasting peace in the country and should make practical efforts for its realization. Mohammad Ishaq Tokhi, aide to the president, was also present at the meeting.

Fire, Shooting at National Guard Headquarters

BK2503050092 Hong Kong AFP in English 0514 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Excerpts] Kabul, March 25 (AFP)—A major fire suspected to have been sparked by an electric short circuit gutted the National Guard headquarters at the foot of the historic Bala Hissar walled citadel here, witnesses said Wednesday [25 March].

The fire Tuesday night was followed by more than an hour of intense gunfire and heavy explosions in the Afghan capital which had raised fears in the curfew-bound city of a coup d'etat.

At the scene of the blaze shortly after curfew was lifted at dawn a fire truck was seen emerging from the walled complex, and smoke was still rising from the multi-storeyed edifice.

Sentries at the heavily-guarded gates of the complex indicated that the fire had been started by an electrical short circuit and said several large military stores including an ammunition depot had gone up in smoke.

Government forces said there was no indication yet of casualties in the fire and the shooting and explosions in the city, but ambulances could be heard in the streets in the early morning hours.

It was not clear what triggered the shooting and explosions, but residents and diplomats speculated that troops posted around the city may have thought the elite National Guard complex was under attack. [passage omitted]

An official government spokesman said he was still awaiting news of casualties in the shooting and in the fire at the headquarters of the National Guard, otherwise known as the elite Presidential Guard.

The spokesman said there had been no official explanation for the outbreak of the fire.

Further on Fire; Clashes Denied

LD2503120992 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1130 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Fire broke out in a room in Balahesar [military garrison south of Kabul] as a result of an electrical short circuit caused by recent heavy rainfall at about 2045 last night. The BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY Military Section reports that winds expanded the area of the fire in the building at Balahesar, which resulted in property damage. Fortunately, no loss of life occurred.

An official source catagorically refuted last night's and this morning's report from Western mass media about armed confrontations and clashes in Kabul, calling them far from the truth.

Mojahedin Capture Sar-e Pol; Troops Defect

LD2403140292 Tehran IRNA in English 1306 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] Tehran, March 24, IRNA—Afghan mojahedin of the Ettehad-e Eslami (Islamic Unity) party in league with dissident military personnel of the Kabul regime have taken control of the province of Sar-e Pol in the north, Mohammad Nateqi, a spokesman of the party told IRNA today. He said Colonel Nezameddin Khan and Bahaeddin of the Kabul forces have joined the mojahedin along with 2,000 soldiers in the province.

According to Nateqi, the defecting soldiers brought with them 17 tanks, 20 heavy vehicles, five anti-aircraft guns, five 76-mm and 100-mm howitzers, six mortar launchers and a lot of light weaponry.

Sar-e Pol is one of the strategic provinces in northern Afghanistan and is located next to Balkh Province. Over the past week, the mojahedin have made some significant gains in the northern parts including the capture of the strategic city of Mazar-e Sharif and the Dehdadi air base.

India

Government Claims Right To Sell Reactors to Iran

LD2503172992 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] India has declared it still reserves the right to sell nuclear reactors to Iran and is now studying the issue. According to an IRNA report, Mr. (Ingra), director of the Indian Nuclear Committee, at a news conference on 25 March stressed that India's nuclear technology programs are implemented for peaceful purposes. He said his country's position in not signing the nuclear disarmament treaty has not changed at all.

The Indian Government is against signing the nuclear disarmament treaty and for this reason is under pressure from America.

Kashmir Liberation Front Chief Arrested

BK2503074892 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] The chairman of the Pakistan-based JKLF [Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front], Mr. Amanullah Khan, was arrested in Rawalpindi today. Earlier, Mr. Amanullah Khan stated that the so-called JKLF will make another attempt to cross the Line of Control [LOC] on Monday [30 March]. Twelve people were killed when the Pakistani security forces opened fire to prevent the previous JKLF attempt to violate the LOC on the 12th of last month.

Spokesman Briefs Press on Talks With Israel

BK2603095092 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 0856 GMT 26 Mar 92

["Spokesman's briefing on talks between Moshe Yegar, deputy director general of Israel, and Indian Foreign Secretary, dated 24th March"; place not given]

[Text] While briefing newsmen, spokesman stated that Deputy Director General of Israel Moshe Yegar had discussions with foreign secretary on 24th March. Visit and discussions can be seen as part of process of normalisation of India's relations with Israel. Talks were held with a view to defining methodologies of giving further impetus and substance to our bilateral relationship. Visiting deputy director general gave foreign secretary a detailed briefing on ongoing Middle East peace process. He sought foreign secretary's views on current round of negotiations. Two officials discussed various possibilities which might enable India to participate in peace process. Objective of India's participation would be to assist ongoing negotiations. There was also a brief discussion on various logistical arrangements which are in process of being tied up for opening of a new mission in Delhi. During Yegar's visit, discussions on follow-up visits by Indian officials to Israel have also taken place. A number of questions were addressed to spokesman asking whether talks had covered matters pertaining to internal security, collaboration on some action on Kahuta [Pakistan's nuclear] installation, and other defence related matters. In response, spokesman clarified that wide ranging discussions with Israeli side have looked at possibilities for cooperation that exist in field of defence. However, there were no specific proposals under consideration at present.

Delhi Asian Peace Role Favored

BK2503150692 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Israel says it favors India's participation in the West Asia peace process. The visiting deputy director general of the Israeli foreign office, Mr. Moshe Yegar, told newspersons in New Delhi this evening that he conveyed this to the Indian officials. Replying to a question, he said his talks are preliminary in nature and are aimed at building confidence between the two countries.

Yegar on Role in Mideast Talks

TA2503152092 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Moshe Yegar, the Foreign Ministry deputy director general, said in New Delhi that Israel has lifted its opposition to India's participation in the Middle East peace talks. Mr. Yegar is heading a delegation to the talks on the opening of the embassy in New Delhi. He said that a delegation from New Delhi would be arriving in Israel in several weeks to discuss India's role in the multilateral talks. Yegar refused to go into detail about his meeting with the Indian defense minister and said it was too early to talk about defense cooperation between the two countries.

Ukrainian President Arrives on State Visit

BK2503162092 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] India and Ukraine are likely to sign a treaty of friendship and cooperation marking the first state visit of President Leonid Kravchuk to New Delhi. Talking to reporters shortly after his arrival to a ceremonial welcome, the Ukrainian president said the two countries will also cooperate in science, technology, and economic matters. He recalled close bonds between India and the erstwhile Soviet Union and hoped that those ties will be the basis for binding friendship between India and the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States. A high-level 24 member delegation is accompanying Mr. Kravchuk. It includes the ministers for foreign affairs and machine building. During his five-day stay in the country, the visiting dignitary will also be meeting leading businessmen and industrialists.

Nuclear-Free Status Sought

BK2603091092 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 26 Mar 92

[Text] The Ukrainian president, Mr. Leonid Kravchuk, has said that his coun*.y wants to pursue nonaligned policies and become a nonnuclear state in the long run. Mr. Kravchuk who called on the president, Mr. R. Venkataraman, in New Delhi today said his country looks forward to closer cooperation with India. The discussions between the two leaders, which lasted for about half an hour, focused mainly on improving cooperation between the two countries in science and technology, building the economic infrastructure, and small industries. The vice president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, called on the Ukrainian president. The two leaders held discussions on a wide range of subjects.

Spokesman on Indo-Vietnam Commission Meeting

BK2503153692 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 1432 GMT 25 Mar 92

["Spokesman's briefing on the fifth session of Indo-Vietnam Joint Commission, dated 24 March, 92"; place not given]

[Text] The spokesman, while briefing newsmen, stated that the fifth session of Indo-Vietnam Joint Commission opened today. It is being co-chaired by the EAM [external affairs minister], and the foreign minister of Vietnam, Nguyen Manh Cam. The last session was held in Hanoi in April 1990. Before meeting, the visiting foreign minister called on the EAM, and they had a discussion on regional and international issues including NAM [Nonaligned Movement] and potential role of the United Nations. They also talked about ways of expanding and intensifying economic, cultural and scientific cooperation. Both the foreign ministers noted with satisfaction the close bilateral ties. The Vietnamese foreign minister expressed his gratitude for India's consistent support during the struggle for independence, reunification, and now reconstruction. Even in the new context where both countries are in the process of liberalising their respective economies, they realise the importance that each has for the other.

The two sides declared their intention to continue to stand by each other and maintain new coordination in conduct of their foreign affairs. Close identity of views on international situation, and the role of the United Nations was reflected in the talks between the two foreign ministers.

Regarding specific issues and bilateral economic cooperation, the EAM suggested that in order to redress the trade balance, we should take a fresh look to countertrade or barter trade. He said that it is a matter of satisfaction for India that a large number of business delegations have been going to Vietnam, and many Indian firms participated in a trade fair last year. The State Bank is going to open an office in Vietnam shortly. ITEC [expansion unknown] programme is going on satisfactorily. Work is proceeding on a Rs [rupees] 10 million industrial estate that was agreed upon during President R. Venkataraman's visit to Vietnam last year. New areas for cooperation, which have been identified, include exploration of natural gas, mining, rock phosphate, rubber, cotton development, cashew nuts, tea production and processing, maritime transport, and remote sensing, etc.

The visiting foreign minister also called on the president and the prime minister.

Areas of Cooperation Identified

BK2503035292 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] India and Vietnam have identified several new areas for cooperation. These include exploration of natural gas, mining of rock phosphates, maritime transport, and tea cultivation. The joint commission, cochaired by the foreign ministers of the two countries, met in New Delhi and also discussed various aspects of increasing bilateral trade.

Uttar Pradesh Criticized on Temple Issue

BK2303131492 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 23 Mar 92

[Text] The home minister, Mr. Chavan, told the Rajya Sabha today that if any state government including the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] government in Uttar Pradesh [UP] does not follow the center's directive, there will be no alternative left but to take recourse to Article 356 of the Constitution. The article provides for dismissal of the state government and imposition of president's rule.

Replying to strong criticism made by the Congress-I, National Front and left party members about the reported demolition of certain structures in Ayodhya, Mr. Chavan said the BJP should make its position clear on the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid [temple-mosque] controversy. Mr. Chavan said in spite of his repeated requests to the UP government, he has so far not received any information from Lucknow regarding the controversy. The issue rocked both the houses with non-BJP members describing the demolition as contravening the High Court orders and a step fraught with serious danger of disturbing the communal amity. Mr. Somnath Chatterjee, CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist], raised the issue during zero hour in the Lok Sabha, while Mr. Suresh Kalmadi, Congress-I, raised the issue in the Rajya Sabha. The house witnessed acrimonious exchanges and uproarious scenes for a while.

Explaining the BJP position on the issue, its leader, Mr. Sikander Bakht, denied that the state government has violated the court order. He said the BJP is committed to the construction of the Ram temple. This brought loud protests from the treasury benches and some opposition members.

The BJP leader, Mr. L.K. Advani, has said the party is committed to constructing the temple at Ayodhya without violating any law. He said the party is conscious of its mandate and will fulfill it. Referring to the controversy of the demolitions reported in the press, Mr. Advani asserted that the work is going on in a park which is not part of the disputed land and had been acquired by the previous governments. He said the UP chief minister had informed him that the acquisition is still valid and that the leveling work has been started in the park.

The Congress-I has accused the UP government of violating the provisions of the recent act passed by parliament relating to protection of religious places in demolishing the structure around Ayodhya temple. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi today, the party spokesman, Mr. Chandulal Chandrakar, said any change in the structure will violate the law.

More on Ayodhya Controversy

BK2403162292 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] has warned the center against what it calls any misuse of Article 356 to thwart the Uttar Pradesh Government's resolve to fulfill its mandate on Ayodhya. The BJP parliamentary party in its resolution this morning criticized the home minister's remarks in this connection in parliament yesterday. Referring to the recent demolitions [at the temple-mosque disputed site] in Aydhoya, the BJP said the state government was only leveling legally-acquired land. It accused the center of either trying to placate what it called the pseudo-secularist lobby or searching for an excuse to intervene in Uttar Pradesh.

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad [VHP, World Hindu Council] says that if the Uttar Pradesh Government is dismissed, the center will have to face a country-wide agitation. Talking to newspersons at Faizabad today, the VHP general secretary, Mr. Ashoke Singhal, said the center will face serious consequences if it interferes in the construction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya.

Meanwhile, agency reports say the demolition of structures in Ayodhya continued for the third day today.

The UP chief minister, Mr. Kalyan Singh, says any decision to impose president's rule in the state will be unconstitutional and against the people's mandate. Reacting to the statement of the union home minister in the Rajya Sabha yesterday, Mr. Kalyan Singh told newspersons in Lucknow today that the reply to the center's query had been sent immediately after the receipt of the message.

The chief minister categorically denied that any temples are being demolished near the disputed site in Ayodhya. He, however, said Sumitra Bhavan, rooms of Sakshi Gopal Mandir, and (Lonus Ashram) had been removed. There is no violation of any decision of the court, and the owners of these structures have been paid adequate compensation. The chief minister said he stands by his government's commitment given in the National Integration Council meeting in November last. The chief minister expressed his happiness over the Babri Masjid [Mosque] action committee's decision to hold talks on the issue, but said if talks failed the temple will be constructed by passing a legislation in the state assembly.

Earlier, several opposition members in the state assembly were today suspended for three days amidst pandemonium in the house on the issue of reported demolition of temples in the vicinity of the dispute Ram Janambhoomi-Babri Mosque in Ayodhya. The opposition members staged a dharna [sit-in agitation] in the well of the house.

The Congress-I has expressed the hope that the Uttar Pradesh Government will respect its own commitment made at the last National Integration Council meeting in regard to the Ram Janambhoomi-Babri Masjid issue. The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] has asked the center to immediately intervene to stop what it described as the provocative activities of the Kalyan Singh government. The Babri Masjid Action Committee has described the transfer of land acquired by the Tourism Department to the Ramjanambhoomi Trust and construction of a wall arond the disputed site as violating the direction of the court.

Home Minister's Statement

BK2503095292 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] The center has asked all the parties concerned, including the Uttar Pradesh [UP] Government, to fully respect the court orders in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid [temple-mosque] dispute. The Home Minister Mr. S.B. Chavan, making a statement in the Rajya Sabha today, said nothing should be done which will flare up communal feelings or the sensitivities regarding the problem and make the settlement of the dispute more difficult. Appealing to all members to avoid emotional outburst which could aggravate the situation, Mr. Chavan exhorted them to show calm and restraint to help find an acceptable solution to the problem.

The home minister said that the state government has informed him that the Tourism Department has removed some permanent and temporary structures on the land acquired in October last for leveling the ground. These include Sumitra Bhavan, Gopal Bhavan, a cottage on the wall of the Lomas Ashram, and some shops outside the disputed area. It is also stated that part of the mandir [temple] in the Sakshi Gopal complex in which the deity is situated has been retained as it is. The UP Government has also informed the center that the Tourism Department has not constructed any permanent structure nor has it transferred the land acquired to anyone. It also claimed that the Tourism Department has fully respected the court orders while taking up the operation, which was completed peacefully.

Referring to the Ram Katha Park project, the state government maintained that there is no dispute in the court regarding this land and the bhoomiswamis [land owners] have received compensation in lieu of the acquisition. It said the Tourism Department gave on lease over 42 acres of this land to the Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas [foundation] for implementation of the project.

Mr. Chavan said he had also taken up with the chief minister the construction of a wall in Ayodhya. The chief minister informed him that the wall is being constructed in the context of the security arrangements for the disputed structure.

The issue figured in the Lok Sabha also during question time and later in the zero hour. Soon after the house met, the opposition barring the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] demanded suspension of regular business to take up the Ayodhya issue. Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan and other National Front and left party members charged the government with following a dual policy on the issue. They demanded that the reported construction should be immediately stopped and called for a statement from the government.

Later, during the zero hour, the BJP leader, Mr. L.K. Advani, said the center sent a team to Ayodhya which, while noting that the state government was taking adequate precautionary steps, recommended a wall be constructed around the complex for security reasons. Opposition members strongly demanded to know the exact position in this regard from the government. The house witnessed procedural wrangles and heated exchanges, with the home minister seeking exception to the source of the information the BJP member had about his receiving the reply from the UP Government.

Team To Visit Disputed Site

BK2503161892 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Excerpts] A delegation of members of Parliament and the Standing Committee of the National Integration Council will visit Ayodhya to assess the situation there. Announcing this in the Parliament today, the home minister, S.B. Chavan, said the center will await the report of the delegation before taking a decision on the issue. He, however, expressed the hope that the Uttar Pradesh [UP] Government will not create a situation where drastic action will be called for.

Replying to points raised by members in both the houses, the home minister said the center will not hesitate to take over the disputed site in Ayodhya if the state government fails to protect it. He regretted that the Kalyan Singh government has not been able to facilitate the visit of the Standing Committee as suggested in a resolution by the National Integration Council.

Mr. Chavan questioned the demolition of some temples in Ayodhya when the land acquisition is subject to the final verdict of the high court. He asked whether the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] government will restore the structures if the final order of the court goes against the acquisition. Some BJP members vociferously protested, saying that no temple has been demolished. The home minister observed that all types of suspicions are rising because the state government has not been giving details about the acquired land. The home minister refuted the BJP claim that the compound wall is being constructed on the recommendation of an experts committee. He clarified that the committee was appointed only to suggest steps to ensure security of the main structure and has nothing to do with the wall being constructed now. [passage omitted]

In the Lok Sabha, noisy scenes prevailed for some time during the question hour with non-BJP opposition demanding an assurance from the government that it will immediately stop the reported construction in the Ayodhya temple complex. Raising the issue, Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan, Janata Dal, said that the prime minister, who was present, should make a statement. The BJP leader, Mr. L.K. Advani, took strong exception to the home minister's statement that if the UP Government does not obey the center's directive, Article 356 is the only option. He asserted that the state government is only fulfilling the mandate given to it by the people. The Janata Dal, left parties, Muslim League, and the Janata Party members charged the BJP government with violating constitutional provisions.

In the UP Assembly, 19 members were suspended today following uproarious scenes over the Ayodhya temple demolition issue. While 10 members have been suspended for three days, the remaining nine were removed from the house for the day. Sixty-four members were suspended yesterday for stalling the proceedings of the house on the Ayodhya issue. Our Lucknow correspondent reports that for the first time in the history of the state assembly, the leader of the opposition has also been suspended for three days.

The Babri Masjid Action Committee, the BMAC, says it will participate in the talks with the UP Government only after it stops building walls around the disputed Ayodhya shrine. In a statement released in New Delhi today, the BMAC said it has sought a clarification from the UP Government as to under which plan the wall is being constructed.

Iran

Ulterior Motives Seen in U.S. Pressure on Ship

NC2103163392 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 9 Mar 92 p 1

[Editorial: "The Uproar Over the Vessel"]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. By raising a deliberate hue and cry, Washington is pursuing two objectives, one on the international level, the other in the strategic Persian Gulf region.

THE NEW YORK TIMES (affiliated to the Zionists) took over the job of creating this hue and cry, and cited various U.S. officials as saying that the U.S. Government was studying the interception and check of the two DPRK vessels. Washington claims that these two vessels are carrying ballistic missiles to Iran and Syria.

Following this report, the Zionist regime's radio (in its English service) joined the plot, announcing that Bush had endorsed THE NEW YORK TIMES report.

George Bush himself revealed the White House plot, giving an official aspect to the uproar, and saying that he was concerned about Scud missiles aboard a DPRK freighter.

Creating a furor against the DPRK, and dragging in the names of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Syria, continues Washington's pressure—initiated some time ago—in the name of arms control in the DPRK, and accusing Iran of trying to obtain nuclear arms. The pressure on Syria is linked to the failure of the peace talks. At the same time, the CIA announced that there could be missiles on board the DPRK vessel destined for Syria, because Israel is within its range.

So the link between White House echelons inciting an uproar about the DPRK vessel, and the Republicans' need to attract public opinion in view of the presidential election campaign, cannot be overlooked.

The failure of Bush and the Republicans in the issue of the two Koreas, the fiasco of the peace talks sponsored by Washington, and the unsuccessful increase of pressure on the Islamic Republic of Iran indicate that the White House inmates are seeking new ways and means of raising a hue and cry so that they might stay in the White House. This time it was the DPRK vessel. The United States pursues two objectives. The inspection of the vessels, if ever implemented, would create an unsatisfactory situation in the Persian Gulf, on which the United States would capitalize, further extending its domination of the resources in the southern Persian Gulf. This would place its future rivals in dire straits, in view of the world order which the United States wants to establish. These are the same rivals which Washington seeks to confront in the new world order.

If the uproar over the vessel escalates, the first danger would be to the Arab countries, which have thoughtlessly thrown themselves into the United States' lap.

Iraq Sanctions Linked to U.S. Policy 'Failure'

NC2203161492 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 14 Mar 92 p 2

[Editorial: "Iraqi Sanctions—For What Purpose?"]

[Text] The continuing imposition of sanctions against Iraq can only be said to be due to the resulting failure of the U.S.-led policy to deal effectively with Saddam Husayn. Instead of ensuring his removal from power following the routing of his army in the Persian Gulf war, the Security Council was directed to issue a whole series of resolutions, designed to humble the Iraqi ruler. The consequence has been to make the people of Iraq pay a high price.

For two days this week, Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz appeared before an extraordinary meeting of the Security Council to appeal for leniency from the crippling sanctions, but was firmly rebuffed in a statement read by its Venezuelan president that reflected the skepticism voiced by the U.S. Ambassador. Diego Arria said that the Iraqi regime had not yet complied fully with the resolutions against it but must do so and take immediate appropriate action.

The argument is essentially over the destruction of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction as demanded under Resolution 687 and on Baghdad's cooperation with a UN special team to oversee their elimination. The issue of sanctions, which have been imposed for over 18 months, fundamentally are unrelated to the demand other than their use to pressure compliance.

The effects of the trade embargo has left a heavy toll on the civilian population, who already have suffered badly owing to the severe backlash against their uprising, in the Shia south and Kurdish north, that had been encouraged by Washington after the war, but other than providing temporary "safe havens" offered no support. In turn, President George Bush, currently seeking re-election, has come under mounting criticism to have left Saddam in power and move only to pare down his military capability.

The supposition is that a weakened Saddam was preferable to the emergence of an alternative government, which Bush could not ensure would be pro-American. Recently, however, it has been suggested that the Iraqi ruler may have served his purpose and that the CIA has been called in to now consider his ouster, that will give Bush a much needed boost to his election ratings.

But if the U.S. President wants to finally remove Saddam, the continued use of sanctions to keep him weak is an insidious way of doing it. The suffering has been immense on the Iraqi people, who should not be used as fodder for such a purpose. Bush this month stated how proud he was to have supported the Iraqi ruler in his war against Iran, why can he not come clean about his current intents against his former ally.

Turkey's Cetin Sends Message on Cypriot Vessel

TA2503181292 Ankara ANATOLIA in Turkish 1655 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Ankara (AA)—Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin's reply to Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati's letter concerning the issue of the [seized] Greek Cypriot

vessel Cape Maleas was handed today to the Iranian authorities by the Turkish Embassy in Tehran.

According to information from an ANATOLIA correspondent, Cetin in his letter explains once more the incident. Stressing the importance Ankara attaches to its relations with Tehran, the letter calls for the further strengthening of this relationship.

The letter notes that the Turkish judiciary is independent and that there is always the possibility of appealing the court's verdict. The letter then refers to the intensive coverage given to the incident in the Iranian press organs, adding that such publications do not contribute to the improvement of bilateral relations.

'Black Chapter' in Relations

NC2303135692 Tehran SALAM in Persian 15 Mar 92 p 12

[Commentary: "The Black Chapter in Tehran-Ankara Ties"]

[Text] The issue of the illegal impounding of the Cape Maleas, which was carrying goods for Iran, concluded after five months with the sudden announcement that the Turkish Government had confiscated the consignment, thus writing a black chapter in Tehran-Ankara relations.

In the past five months, there has been no effective or practical move to persuade Turkey to correct its hostile stance. Instead, the Turks were treated with flexibility and restraint. According to some, this policy was designed to resolve the issue amicably.

The Turks resorted to stalling for time and, instead of taking appropriate measures, adopted a strident posture. After his visit to Tehran, Ozal told CUMHURIYET that "Turkey did not have the right to impound the Cape Maleas." Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel made some cryptic comments, linking the consignment's release to Iran helping to crush the Kurds in Turkey. Thus, Iran's diplomacy achieved no tangible results.

In view of the unfortunate outcome of this incident and similar ones, we should consider some other points regarding Iran's recent gains in its relations with Turkey. Turkish officials recently stepped up their restrictions on political and cultural cadres, as well as on local employees of Iranian cultural and diplomatic missions. This included refusing to extend their residence permits; insulting the local employees; and banning some legal Iranian cultural center activities, such as the dissemination of the politico-religious will made by Imam Khomeyni.

The Turkish Government's most degrading act was to broadcast a television program against the Iranian clergy, which violated the Turk-proposed mutual understanding not to use government media for negative propaganda.

Turkish military moves have been escalated in northern Iraq, such as the repeated military aggression under the pretext of combating a few armed Kurdish opponents. Turkish officials openly state that they plan extensive operations in the region.

The world has witnessed the upgrading of Ankara-Tel Aviv ties to the ambassadorial level, after which Turkish companies enthusiastically offered their services to construction projects in occupied Palestine, even signing a contract for Turkish prefabricated houses and their installation in Israel.

Glancing at Tehran-Ankara relations, should we not consider these regrettable developments in our appraisal of forging ties with Turkey? Should we not revise our ties with Ankara to prevent incidents like that of the Cape Maleas?

U.S. Forces 'Pitch Tents' on 'Oil Wells'

NC2203145992 Tehran SALAM in Persian 10 Mar 92 p 12

[Commentary: "What Is the United States Doing in the Persian Gulf?"]

[Text] The announcement that U.S. warships in the Persian Gulf would halt, check, impound, and even destroy the two North Korean vessels shows that U.S. military forces are displaying a different facade. Earlier it was stated that U.S. forces were in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and other GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] countries merely for defensive purposes.

Iraq's unsuccessful aggression against Kuwait and subsequent military defeat gave the Americans and the American military forces a suitable opportunity to pitch their tents on the oil wells. Despite their announcements that they would eventually depart, they are still there.

They continued to claim that their objectives were to safeguard the oil and the defenseless Arabs. Gradually they declared that they would stage maneuvers to keep troops busy and to maintain combat readiness. Then the maneuvers became more protracted, revealing ulterior motives. The extent of the maneuvers shows that there are other, new assignments.

Meanwhile, the region's active powers were content to set up diplomatic barricades and take a flexible attitude toward participation in regional security arrangements. Iran's efforts were merely directed at forging and improving neighborly relations, while the southern states were involved in strengthening military links with the United States.

Finally, this diplomacy proved unsuccessful and inefficient, because the southern Persian Gulf governments did not envisage any role for Iran, and even sought to undermine Iran's presence in the Persian Gulf.

At last the United States' new assignment in the Persian Gulf has transpired, and unfortunately, even now, the

balance of power in the region does not seem clear enough to display a proper approach to the increasing U.S. presence in the region. The United States' obvious objective is a naval siege of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on the pretext of disarmament and reducing Iran's military presence in the Persian Gulf—our country's vital economic route. This is a national disaster.

The enemy always acts step by step, testing the level of resistance before taking the next step. Continuing silence and indifference is tantamount to giving the United States the keys to the Persian Gulf. Today the United States is more belligerent than ever, and if it is not thwarted its next step will be even more daring.

Cabinet Discusses Elections, Nagorno-Karabakh

LD2503225292 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] The first cabinet meeting of the new year was held this afternoon. During the meeting, Interior Minister Nuri briefed the cabinet on the preliminary election for the fourth Majles session. Several representatives from the Central Committee for Election Supervision took part in the meeting, and informed the cabinet of the committee's views on the election proceedings so far.

Then President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, conveying the cabinet's gratitude to those engaged in the election arrangements in the executive and supervision committees, expressed the hope that with the correct action of all concerned, the important task—the elections for this session—will be held in total peace and with wide participation.

Later, Foreign Affairs Minister Velayati reported to the cabinet on the latest developments in Karabakh. He described the ceasefire between Azerbaijan and Armenia as heartwarming but complicated. He also expressed the hope that, with the responsible cooperation of neighbors and regional forces, the ground will be prepared for establishing peace in a more appropriate manner.

Red Cross Accused of Subversive Activity

NC2503165092 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 10 Mar 92 pp 1, 2

[Editorial: "What Are the International Red Cross Employees Doing?"]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The organizations for assistance and relief work in every country are the most humanitarian part of services. That is why they enjoy the people's and government's support and attention. The objectives of such organizations are usually confined to assisting people in adverse circumstances or facing difficult living conditions.

Such organizations usually function under the auspices of the International Red Cross [IRC], a worldwide organization, and have contacts with similar organizations throughout the world. [passage omitted]

In the past decade, the IRC has had a black record regarding its activities in the Islamic Republic of Iran. This is why people throughout our country have demonstrated against it.

During the imposed war against Iraq, the IRC was assigned espionage operations, passing information and intelligence to Iraq's supporters. It is a fact that the IRC officials and emissaries carried out various espionage operations in the Islamic Republic of Iran during the war.

The IRC is recognized as a neutral body; however, it never adopted a neutral stance in the Iran-Iraq, always maintaining a double standard. With Iran, it always had a very demanding attitude; however, it turned a blind eye to the unlawful behavior of the Baghdad regime toward the Iranian POW's, even to the extent of showing indifference on the issue. It never carried out its responsibilities toward the Iranian POW's.

The IRC's abuse of the facilities and opportunities provided to it during the course of its representatives' visits to the Iraqi POW camps in Iran during the imposed war became a regular feature, always accompanied by spying and conveying of information.

IRC officials extracted information from the Ba'thist POW's and passed the information along to the Baghdad regime. The Ba'thist savages then wreaked violence and tortured the POW family members in Iraq. [passage omitted]

Even though the imposed war has ended, reliable evidence indicates that IRC officials have once again overstepped the limits of their obligations and are abusing their privileges under cover of their duties.

IRC representatives are currently engaged in identifying and organizing the organizations and links with the disbanded counterrevolutionary grouplets and are striving to forge links with members of these grouplets abroad. The black dossier of the IRC in Iran has once again been opened and they have once again embarked on treachery, espionage, and interference in the internal affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This will not be tolerated.

Most of the IRC members maintain links with Western espionage organizations, especially the CIA, and act as their agents in Iran. In some cases they are financed by the United States and the Zionists to reorganize the disbanded grouplets.

Issues such as these need to be laid bare before the nation so that the people are aware of the depth of the matter. They should know that the IRC continues to carry out its espionage activities against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

It is also essential that Iranian officials follow up this matter so that the possibility of similar abuses in the Islamic Republic of Iran by the United States and Zionism are eliminated.

The IRC's efforts to regroup the disbanded grouplets by abusing the resources placed at their disposal by the Islamic Republic of Iran is not something the people will easily ignore. The officials should place all details before the people, who have the right to be concerned about the IRC's activities here. This concern is understandable. The IRC should be warned not to toy with the Iranian people's sentiments and to consider the bitter consequences of their treacherous actions.

Commentary Assails MKO-U.S. 'Alliance'

NC2203151492 Tehran ABRAR (INTERNATIONAL SUPPLEMENT) in English 12 Mar 92 p 16

[Commentary: "MKO Again Reveals Its Real Nature and Plots Against Islamic Iran"]

[Text] The Monafeqin (MKO) [Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization] group after years of treachery against the nation last week issued a statement addressed to the U.N. Security Council and in a humiliating way called for economic and arms sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran! The MKO this time resorted to the propaganda raised by the U.S. Government on the North Korean ship alleged to be carrying missiles to Iran.

What the leaders of MKO and their American masters should note is that Iran is now independent and its statesmen can very well provide for all its needs.

Islamic Iran can independently provide for its defense needs. And moreover the world community knows very well the 13-year humanitarian stance of the Islamic Republic, which even during the most critical situation never resorted to violent means which its enemies have used.

The Islamic Republic of Iran relies on the rich culture of Islam which is filled with humanitarian and peaceful ideals, and no doubt for continued survival Iran does not need weapons of mass destruction.

The Monafeqin imagine that the new world order means one-sided domination of America over the world affairs and the right to determine the affairs of other countries.

The Islamic Republic of Iran relies solely on the legitimate support of the people. The years of MKO's alliance with America and impotence of its various plots has clearly proved the emptiness of this mini-group. But like in the past the MKO leaders are once again hallucinating and think themselves masters of others' destinies.

Islamic Iran does not have the feeling of inferiority which the MKO has and which has forced it again and again to resort to the embrace of one or other foreign power. The real and primary resource of Iran is that it enjoys a legitimate, popular base in the country, whether the Monafeqin like it or not.

Resorting to such tools will not have the slightest effect on the policies of the Islamic Republic.

Pakistan

Nagorno-Karabakh Issue, JKLF Arrest Noted

BK2503150892 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1415 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Pakistan supports all efforts for a peaceful settlement of the dispute over the Nagorno-Karabakh issue between Azerbaijan and Armenia. A Foreign Office spokesman told newsmen in Islamabad today that Pakistan has been watching with concern the fighting over Nagorno-Karabakh and welcomes reports suggesting that Azerbaijan and Armenia may have agreed to resolve their differences peacefully.

The spokesman also stated that the chief of JKLF [Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front], Mr. Amanullah Khan, has been taken into custody to avoid law and order situation. He said the government has decided to make all possible efforts to persuade JKLF not to go ahead with its plans to cross the Line of Control and hoped that this matter will be resolved amicably.

Official Briefs EC Envoys on Kashmir

BK2403150292 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1415 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] Pakistan has called upon the world community to urge India to review its policy of suppression and killing of innocent people in occupied Kashmir and enter into a meaningful dialogue to solve the Kashmir issue. The call was made by the secretary general of foreign affairs, Mr. Akram Zaki, during the briefing on Kashmir to ambassadors and heads of missions of the European Community in Islamabad today.

Mr. Akram Zaki gave a detailed background of the Kashmir issue and efforts made by the prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif. Mr. Akram Zaki explained that while India paid lip service to the Simla Agreement for almost two decades, it has refused to hold any meaningful discussion under that agreement. Pakistan, he said, wants a peaceful settlement of the Kashmir question and is ready for negotiations under the Simla Agreement on the basis of UN resolutions because the Simla Agreement provides no mechanism for the settlement, while UN resolutions envisage a plebiscite to determine the wishes of the people of Kashmir.

He said over 400,000 Indian troops have been deployed in occupied Kashmir in the wake of spontaneous and indigenous struggle launched by Kashmiri people for self-determination and democracy, which deserves the support of all freedom-loving nations. He said Pakistan has repeatedly offered the stationing of impartial observers which India has rejected. India has also refused to allow any humanitarian agency, media, or even European parliamentarians to visit the Kashmir Valley under their control.

The secretary general thanked the European Parliament for its resolution on the Kashmir issue. He hoped that

like the EC, the members of the European governments would also intensify their efforts at finding a solution of the Kashmir issue in accordance with UN resolutions, which is in the interest of peace and stability of the entire region. Mr. Ferreira Ramos, the ambassador of Portugal, which is the current chairman of the EC, thanked the secretary general on behalf of the EC ambassadors posted in Islamabad for a very timely and comprehensive briefing on Kashmir. He said there was a growing concern in the whole world community for an early resolution of the Kashmir problem.

Spokesman Reaffirms Commitment to UN Resolution

BK2503153892 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] A Foreign Office spokesman has said that both Pakistan and India are committed to peacefully resolving the Kashmir issue in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions. Answering questions about the recent statement by the UN secretary general on Kashmir, the spokesman said in Islamabad today that Pakistan's stand on the issue is quite clear. The spokesman made special reference to the relevant UN resolutions and said that both Pakistan and India are committed to implementing the resolutions calling for an impartial plebiscite under the UN aegis in Jammu and Kashmir. The spokesman pointed out that the overwhelming majority of the Kashmiri population is in favor of an impartial plebiscite to decide the future.

Answering a question, the spokesman said the authorities have taken Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front Chief Amanullah Khan into custody to avoid problems with law and order.

High-Level Meeting Discusses Defense Production

BK2503150492 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1415 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] A high-level meeting held in Rawalpindi today discussed ways and means to achieve self-reliance in defense production. The meeting reviewed various measures in the light of the directives of the prime minister in which he reiterated his government's policy of self-reliance. Presiding over the meeting, the federal minister for defense, Syed Ghaus Ali Shah, underlined the need for encouraging private sector in defense production with emphasis on acquisition of modern technology. The federal minister for defense production, Mir Hazar Khan Bijarani, said private sector's involvement is vital to achieve the depth necessary to maximize indigenization of defense production. The secretary, defense production, gave a presentation on master plan for indigenization of defense industry covering the organizational changes and policy matters which require to be set up under the plan.

* Decision To Cross Control Line Postponed

92AS0764A Lahore MUSAWAT in Urdu 28 Feb 92 p 1

[News Report—"Decision To Cross Control Line Postponed Due To Ramazan—Next attempt to cross control line will be accompanied by armed personnel and food rations. Decisions were made in an extremely secret gathering held under the leadership of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front's leader, Iman Ullah Khan in Muzafrabad."]

[Text] Lahore 27 Feb—Special Correspondent—Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front has postponed its decision to cross the control line on 30 March. Sources said that this decision was made yesterday in Muzafrabad in a highly secret gathering chaired by JKLF's [Jamu and Kashmir Liberation Front] leader, Iman Ullah Khan. After its attempt to cross the control line on 12 February, the JKLF had announcedd that it would cross the control line again on 30 March. According to sources, JKLF postponed its decision to cross the control line on 30 March due to a shortage of arms and Ramazan. It was revealed that next time, the JKLF will cross the control line with armed personnel and plenty of food. In an effort to organize the JKLF and increase its manpower, Iman Ullah Khan has issued instructions to the JKLF's activists in occupied Azad Kashmir and Pakistan to contact all Kashmiri orgnizations at regional levels and unite them under the JKLF's platform by Eid-ul-Fitar. Once reorganized, these regional organizations would hold rallies in favor of independent Kashmir in their respective cities. According to sources, after uniting the Kashmiri people, the JKLF will attempt to cross the control line with fully armed personnel.